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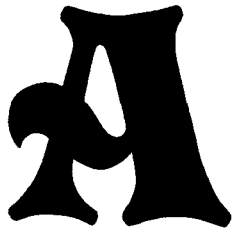

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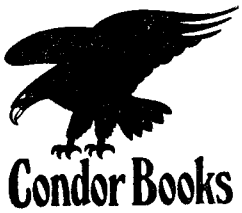

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Isaac Bashevis Singer

The Adventure

FOR YEARS I DID business with him and he never had a good word for me. A state of friendly hostility existed between us. Morris Shapiro was the owner of the well-known printing shop Kadimah, and I, David Greidinger, was the unknown editor of a budding magazine, *Sproutings*. Morris Shapiro disliked both our pretentious writings and the new Yiddish orthography. Besides, we always owed him money. Often the young writers revised their stories and essays when the typed pages were already going to press. Morris Shapiro used to tell them, "The stuff reads better with the errors than without them."

Before the war, Morris Shapiro's printing shop was one of the largest in Warsaw, with fifteen linotypes and two printing presses. After the war the competition became intense. The Printers' Union demanded higher wages. Morris Shapiro constantly threatened that he would sell out or give everything away to the scrap dealer. The modern Hebrew was as obnoxious to him as the new fangled Yiddish. He ridiculed the so-called futuristic poetry which had neither rhyme nor rhythm. He often spoke nostalgically of Peretz, Frishman, Spector and the other classics whose works he printed.

Although there were constant rumours about his being on the verge of bankruptcy, he still conducted himself as if he were a rich man. He never touched the typed pages and never came near the machines where he might soil his hands. He sat in his office behind a fancy mahogany desk and a manservant brought him tea, cookies, an orange. Morris Shapiro was short, broadly built, with a grey moustache and a shock of white hair that used to be pitch black, but never lost its youthful lustre. On the bridge of his wide nose he wore a gold-rimmed pince-nez which was attached to his lapel by a black ribbon. His shirt was invariably spotless and there were golden cuff-links in his shirtsleeves. Even the abacus on which he made his calculations was an expensive one, with wires that shone like silver and with discs of ivory. His dark eyes behind the thick lenses expressed stern dignity. When the telephone rang, Morris Shapiro did not answer immediately. He finished reading the paragraph of his newspaper, or slowly chewed and swallowed the bite in his mouth. Only then would he lift up the receiver and say, "Nu". . . .

I had heard that Morris Shapiro had a wife and that some misfortune had befallen his son. I knew nothing else about his family nor did it concern me. All I wanted from him was the correction of typographical errors and the lines to be in proper order. Printers always considered young writers half-idiots, and writers never took printers seriously.

I DID NOT REALLY know how the change came about, but Morris Shapiro began to treat me more kindly. It seemed to me a sign that my literary stock had risen. Once in a while he threw in a word of praise for my writing. He offered me a glass of tea or a cookie. Formerly he never asked me to sit down when I entered his office. Now he would point to a chair. It pleased me but not excessively. I had no desire to engage in conversations with him and to listen to his opinions. Without his angry looks and his caustic comments Morris Shapiro appeared less interesting. He used to criticise severely all the allusions to sex in my stories; now he began to point out how true they were. It became clear that his whole attitude towards me had changed. But why? Had he read a laudatory review somewhere about me? Did one of the older writers praise me? It was not worth while pondering about. I had come to the conclusion long ago that it made no sense to look for consistency

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in people. Things soon came to such a pass that Morris Shapiro wanted to converse with me for more time than I was inclined to offer him. Often I had to interrupt him and excuse myself. Then he would frown and ask, "What is your rush? Your little scribblers will wait for you."

One day Morris Shapiro invited me to his home for supper. I was amazed; I did not have the slightest desire to spend an evening with him. But I could not refuse. I was sure I would find a bunch of printers, paper dealers, bookbinders, and fat women in his house. I had to brace myself with patience. That evening I shaved carefully, put on my best suit and bought some flowers. Then I took a droshky to his house. It was an ordeal for me, but I hoped that the magazine might benefit from it, although I knew quite well that he would not print for us without charge. I walked up the marble steps, pressed the bell on the right hand side of the carved door, where the brass tab with the engraved name of the tenant sparkled. I soon heard steps. I expected to hear the noise of guests and to see many overcoats and hats on the clothes-rack in the foyer. But the apartment was quiet. The door was opened by a middle-aged woman, small, girlishly slender, her hair streaked grey and brown, combed in a bun, not cropped *à la garçon* as was then the fashion. Her dress, too, was longer than those worn by the fashionable women. A motherly kindness looked out from her dark eyes. She had a narrow nose, thin lips and a youthful chin. She smiled at me with knowing friendliness. "Pan Greidinger, please give me your coat. My husband is a little late. He asked me to excuse him. Something went wrong with a machine."

"It's all right."

"Please, come in."

She led me into a living-room furnished in the middle-class style: an ottoman, upholstered chairs with fringes, a piano, a threadbare oriental carpet, lithographs on the walls. The house smelled of naphthaline and bygone affluence. On a low table stood a bottle of cordial and a glass bowl filled with cookies. The woman poured a glass for me and one for herself and she said: "I want you to know that my husband is a great admirer of yours. He often talks about you and praises you highly. I rarely used to read Yiddish, mostly Polish and Russian. But some time ago he began to bring your magazine to me and I am now an ardent reader of yours."

"This is a pleasant surprise to me," I said. "Mr Shapiro used to be highly critical of my work."

"True, he disliked your too daring descriptions of—how shall I call it?—private matters. Well, but times do change. In comparison with the modernists you are quite modest. Also, one cannot deny that these things are important. Besides, no one can dictate to a writer how to write. The main thing is that it is interesting and——"

THE WOMAN SPOKE slowly and thoughtfully. During the course of our conversation, I learned that her father was a rich man in Warsaw, one of the enlightened. She, Anna, had studied in a boarding school for *Panienkas*. She had had a son by Morris Shapiro but he had died during a flu epidemic some years ago. Mrs Shapiro pointed to a portrait of a boy in the uniform of a gymnasiast. Her eyes became moist and her chin trembled. She said: "Lost is lost," and she took a sip of the brandy.

It was quite difficult for me to imagine her as the wife of the severe Morris Shapiro, but on the other hand, he must have been a handsome young man. He knew Hebrew, Russian, once took part in a Zionistic Congress. I was glad that I did not find a house full of guests. The cordial was sweet and strong, the anise cookies melted in my mouth. The woman spoke quietly, gently, with the special confidence women show to their favourite writers. She said to me: "You are still quite young. How old are you? You are only beginning to develop. You have the courage to be yourself."

"How can one not be oneself?" I asked, just to make conversation.

"Most people try to imitate someone, or to satisfy others. Take me for example——"

And the woman tactfully hinted that she married upon the wish of her parents, not of her own choice. Her real desire was to go abroad to study at a university instead of becoming a housewife. But when Grisha was born she decided to devote herself entirely to his upbringing, both intellectually and physically. "Then came a microbe and

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destroyed the work of a lifetime. What is there to be done? One has to suffer and go on living."

"Yes, true."

"Why do you let me talk only about myself? Why don't you tell me something about yourself? Actually, I know quite a lot about you from your stories."

THE LONGER THE WOMAN talked, the clearer it became to me that it was for a special purpose that they had invited me—a strange and sensational purpose. The woman confided in me, told me the most intimate facts of her marriage. They were in short as follows: since their son died, the relationship between her and her husband deteriorated. To begin with, she became frigid. She could not let Morris approach her. This went on for two years. Later when she learned that Morris engaged in a clandestine affair with the wife of a typesetter, her sexual desire rekindled, but Morris had become impotent towards her. They spent a lot of money for doctors, spas, hydropathy. Nothing helped. The situation was now so bad that if she would not have sexual relations, she would break down. The family doctor had advised her to find someone, but who could it be? She had no male friends whom she could proposition. Her husband's cronies were all solid citizens, married for many years, fathers of grown children, even grandfathers. Besides, she had to maintain her reputation. She still had an old mother, uncles, aunts, a whole clan of nephews and nieces. Anna emptied her glass of cordial and spoke to me clearly: if I agreed, she would be mine—not here in Warsaw, but on a trip somewhere in Zakopane or Zoppot. In what way was she worth less than the loose females with whom, according to my writings, I caroused? She would cover all the expenses. At least I would not contract a venereal disease from her.

I sat there shocked. I said in a choked voice: "Does your husband know about this?"

"It is his idea."

I drank a whole glass of the cordial. "Why did he choose me?".

"Oh, because of your writings. We would not choose a man off the street. There must be some feeling and all the rest of it. You are so much younger than I, true. But you mentioned in one of your sketches that you liked older women."

"Yes, I do."

"We had to come to a decision."

I marvelled how this modest woman could speak of such matters so directly. But I had already convinced myself that the quiet and the introverted can be unbelievably daring. My knees shook.

"Your husband will undoubtedly change his mind."

"No, he understands and is tolerant. He is under the spell of the other woman, even though she is a vulgar creature. Grisha's death shattered both of us. How I remained alive after this blow is beyond me. But we changed thoroughly. Our life together does not depend on physical contact anymore. We are like brother and sister."

"Aha!"

"Whatever your answer will be, I hope you won't compromise us."

"God forbid! I swear by all that is sacred to me."

"Well, it is not necessary. Ten years ago, if someone would have told me that I was capable of such talk or even of such thoughts, I would have considered him a degenerate and crazy too. But it seems that this blow has numbed me. I feel as though I were in a trance. Just the same, instincts awoke in me of which I was never aware. Perhaps it is only an illusion, but I'm constantly tortured. Morris has suffered too much at my hands to be able to approach me. It may sound strange to you, but Grisha comes between us always to prevent any intimacy. He appears to me in his shroud and wails at me. Even though you are a writer, you won't understand this."

"I do understand."

"How? No. I intended to go about it gradually, but I have no more patience. I decided to speak to you openly."

"You did the right thing."

"What is your answer? You do not have to decide right now. If you don't like me and I am not—as they say—your type, please don't be embarrassed. You owe me nothing. I could almost be your mother."

"You are a beautiful and a noble woman."

"Neither beautiful nor noble. You speak to a person who is spiritually crushed. When

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Grisha left, he took everything, even my sense of honour."

We were silent for a while. Then I asked, "Isn't Mr Shapiro going to come home now?"

"No, he went to the other one. Come, let's have dinner."

AT DINNER I promised my hostess an answer within three days. I thereby implied that I actually accepted her proposition. We would go to Zoppot or maybe to Danzig where we would have complete privacy. Mrs Shapiro had prepared a sumptuous meal but I had no appetite. I wanted to compliment her, embrace her, kiss her, but some inner force withheld me. I could not even look her straight in the face. My boyhood bashfulness had returned and paralysed me. Everything remained untouched: the soup, the meat, the dessert. I was even unable to drink my glass of tea. Mrs Shapiro too became silent. We faced one another across the table mute and tense. I had the uncanny feeling that an invisible being lurked between us, watching all our movements. Was this Grisha? My nerves, or whatever it was, began to play tricks on me. My intestines seemed to shrink and my stomach bulged. I needed to urinate but I dared not ask for the bathroom. After trying to taste the piece of honeycake which Mrs Shapiro pressed on me, I rose and said in a strangely official tone: "I will call you, I must leave."

"You are running away already? Well. . . ."

The woman handed me my coat and hat. In the hallway she offered me her hand and both our palms felt wet. I hurried down the stairs. I belched and hiccupped. A sour fluid filled my mouth and I was about to throw up. I ran along the street and I imagined that the gutter rose in front of me and that any minute I would fall backwards.

That night I could not sleep. Each time I dozed off, my leg twitched and the mattress under me rang as if a bell were hidden among the springs. The next day I was supposed to go to the printing shop for what was called the last revision, but I lacked the courage to meet Mr Shapiro. I thought I would have to get in contact with another printer for the coming issues, but this would have been a cowardly step, to say the least, towards a man who had placed such an extraordinary trust in me. There was only one way out; to dispense with the magazine. It didn't turn out as I expected anyway. Writers of whom I had a low opinion had managed to worm their way in.

During the three days in which I was supposed to give my answer, my mood vacillated. For a while my nervousness abated and I was about to ring up Mrs Shapiro and make an appointment. Then again I was seized with terror and a desire to escape and hide. At night I dreamt that a young man, with a face as white as chalk, scolded me and tore at my hair. I took sleeping pills but continued to awake. Although there was no heating in my room, I perspired. My pyjamas became drenched and my pillow twisted as if it had gone through a wringer. My skin pricked and every few minutes I jumped up as if bitten by a bedbug. The third day I rose at dawn, took out the Bible from my bookcase, raised my hand and vowed that I would never take any part in this adulterous adventure.

Thank God, the apartment in which I roomed had no telephone. There was no danger that Mr Shapiro or his wife might call. I left everything at the printing shop—typed copy, manuscripts, proofs. The young writers who contributed to the magazine came to investigate why we stopped publishing. My co-editors wanted to give me extended authority. I had made believe that I was leaving because of a review which appeared against my wish and which raved about a mediocre book. A meeting of all the contributors and editors was called. I did not attend. The last issue, which contained a sketch of mine, appeared five weeks late. I did not read the proofs and it came out with many mistakes and garbled lines.

I don't know until today whether Mr Shapiro got fully paid for that number. Not only did I avoid his printing shop, but even the street where it was located. I joined a new group of writers and we published a magazine which was printed out of town. For some years I never heard the name Morris Shapiro mentioned. The former group of writers fell apart. Some left for the U.S. or Argentina. Others got married and went into business. I myself got a job on a newspaper.

One day while working on my column, a

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colleague of mine said: "Have you heard the latest? Mr Shapiro, the printer, died."

"When?"

"The city room just got the call."

Again some time passed. I had entered a trolley car that went to Danzig station. There was one vacant seat and I sat down near a woman. I looked up and I recognised Mrs Shapiro. She was still in mourning. Her hair had turned white. I wanted to rise and get off at the next station but she had already seen me. She said: "I don't know if you remember me, but I remember you quite well."

"Mrs Shapiro!"

"Yes, it's me."

For a long while we were both silent. Mrs Shapiro swallowed hard.

"Perhaps it is too late for it, but I want to thank you."

"What for?" I asked.

"Oh, I was insane at that time, simply out of my mind. It was a miracle that you were wiser and more responsible."

"I was simply shy."

"Nothing would have come of it anyhow. I loved my husband with all my heart. It was all a result of my agony. Until my last day I will thank God that He spared me this kind of downfall. I am grateful to you too. I guess you know, Morris is not alive any more."

"Yes, I am deeply sorry."

"I tortured him so that he too became deranged. We often spoke about you. He actually mentioned your name a few days before his death."

A controller came in and clipped off parts of our tickets. Mrs Shapiro looked at me sideways and nodded. I heard her murmur: "Grisha would never have allowed it."

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The Ruin

I see it still,
The gothic ruin crowning Welford Hill;
"At dawn", I said, "it seems to glow
With an unworldly light, as though
Not merely made of stone;
Surely a soul still claims that skeleton?"

You answered me:
"Look harder now; the structure that you see
Is only half-complete—our new
Cathedral: what looks to you
Like a great ruin is
The unfinished hulk of a great edifice."

But now—a shock:
Thirty years later, coming to take stock
Of the remembered "ruin", I see
This finished mediocrity—
For all its prosperous bulk
The ruin of a once unfinished hulk!

Edward Lowbury

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Henry Fairlie

The Lessons of Watergate

On the Possibility of Morality in Politics

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES, as the story has been unfolded, when one wished that the whole wretched affair was not known simply as "Watergate." The conspiracy to break into the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee was only a part of the mischief, not obviously the most significant; and, as long as the attention of the American public was fixed on the break-in, it may have felt some irritation but was not shocked. By itself the break-in could be regarded as an escapade, for which the responsibility of the President was tenuous and unclear.

But the name of "Watergate" is in fact appropriate. No one who reads the transcripts of Presidential conversations that were surrendered by the White House can fail to be impressed by the way in which Richard Nixon was, step by step, fatally enmeshed in the repercussions of this single incident. What would we know of his misconduct, and that of his administration, if the break-in had not taken place and the burglars had not been discovered? It was as a result of this incident that he gave his sanction, not as a party leader to the corruption of his election campaign, but as a public official to the corruption of his entire administration. It was as a result of this incident, and the nature of his reaction to it, that we now know so much of what otherwise might have remained hidden.

If one reads the transcripts, together with the rest of the evidence, from the point of view of the President, one sees how the Watergate break-in at first seemed to be a cloud no bigger than a man's hand; and then watches, almost with awe, the other clouds that began to gather round it, rolling from the horizon, growing ever larger and darker, until they at last covered the whole sky. The incident was crucial in the event—which has been the baring to the public of the unscrupulous political operations of a President and his administration—and it is in this way that "Watergate" in itself has become a stigma, as potent as the scarlet letter as a symbol; its name will suffice.

WE MUST realise that the symbol, and the mischiefs that it represents, were clear at the time. One sometimes has cause to be grateful that as a journalist one's opinions are on record. For six months I wrote week by week about the election campaign of 1972 for the *Spectator*. I was not impressed by George McGovern as he advanced to the nomination, finding it hard to take him, and especially his followers, with any real seriousness; but neither was I impressed by Richard Nixon. Indeed, I might have been neutral in my observations if the Watergate break-in had not been discovered. Watergate was followed quickly by the whiff of corruption in what was even then revealed of the ITT case and of the subsidy to the dairy industry. The more one sniffed at it all, the more the whiff was a stench; and I moved to the attack in the sense of saying, "Here is the 'old Nixon', all the evidence that we need, and he is insupportable."

That was the general reaction of the British correspondents in Washington at the time; in particular, of John Midgley of the *Economist*, who stitched together his indictment like petit-point, and of Peter Jenkins of the *Guardian*, who used a mallet. We were all dismayed—even incredulous—that our editors at home were so insensitive to the significance of what was being revealed in Washington, which we were reporting. The mischiefs, of which the evidence was then already so abundant, were treated by them as little more than peccadillos; and this was true even of Bernard Levin who wrote a *Times* column after the election in which he took Jenkins, and by implication the rest of us, to task for his "exaggerations", and fervently welcomed

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the return of Nixon for a second term with as resounding a fanfare as that with which Marc-Antoine Charpentier in his *Te Deum* greeted the recovery from a grave illness of His Most Excellent and Christian Majesty, the King of France.

One came near, at the time, to writing to *The Times* (of London) that "It *Is* a Moral Issue". So obviously is it moral and from the beginning could be seen to be so, that one can think of no other event in the recent history of the great democracies that so urgently compels us to consider the place—the possibility—of morality in politics. We need to bring to the questions that it raises our common sense as well as our gravity. For, if our understanding of them is not correct, we will expect of our politicians either a false rectitude or none at all, and in either case we will lose yet more of our faith in the political process. It is the possibility of morality in the process itself to which our attention has been directed, to the meaning of the rules of the game and the need for their observance.

At first from many people, and even now from a few, one has had to encounter one of the two reactions to Watergate: either the general observation that it is "just politics" or "politics is always like that", or the more particular version that Lyndon Johnson—sometimes it is said of Harry Truman as well, but the charge is usually laid only against Johnson—did "just the same" or "even worse." Neither of these statements is true; but they have a speciousness that can be met only by an answer that is not evasive. Where is the palpable difference in conduct?

Lyndon Baynes Johnson was a poor man when he entered politics; during a long political career he accumulated a fortune and died a rich man. He would not have been so rich, and would not have made his wealth in the same manner, if he had not been in politics. One cannot deny that one of his rewards from politics was his booty: the ranch, the television stations, and so on. More specifically, one cannot deny that he was able to amass the booty as a result partly of the peculiar character of politics in single-party Texas, partly of his long intimacy with the régime of the Rooseveltian New Deal, and partly of his personal power as a Senator.

All of which is a more than twice-told tale in the politics of the country. That politicians will profit from their political careers is not something that causes the American people to raise their eyebrows; and one must face the fact that the politician may profit and yet not be dishonest. He may use the system to "line his pockets", as it is available to be used and known to be, and yet not misuse or abuse it; and this is the impression that one forms of Johnson. During the Presidential campaign of 1964, for example, there were vigorous inquiries into his personal fortune, not least in an extended report that was published by the *Wall Street Journal*. And yet, when one had read it all, there was no "smell" about it; one did not turn up one's nose.

His cupidity may have been more brash than that of some others, just as his alertness to his opportunities was more keen, but one does not get the feeling that his position as a politician was up for sale—that he was "bought"—at least, not beyond the accepted conventions of the patron-client relationship in American politics. There is a sense in which he might even be justified by saying that he did the "buying", to the limit but not beyond the rules of the game.

The power of Robert Walpole was sedulously maintained by his management of a *system* of political corruption; but we do not think of him primarily—we do not find it relevant to think of him—as a corrupt man. We are inclined to stay with the judgment of Macaulay that he "had seen so much perfidy and meanness that he had become sceptical of the existence of probity. . . ." On the other hand, Henry Fox, first Lord Holland, made a fortune many times over, as Paymaster-General, and we do think of him, and find it relevant to think of him, as a corrupt man. Moreover, so did his contemporaries, even though they accepted the *system* of the time. It was four years after Fox had been forced to resign that the livery of the City of London brought a petition against him, describing him as "the public defaulter of unaccounted millions", and it is on this contemporary opinion that Macaulay, again, leans in his indictment of Fox:

> . . . by the nation he was regarded as a man of insatiable rapacity and desperate ambition; as a man ready to adopt, without scruple, the most immoral and the most unconstitutional manners; as a man perfectly fitted, by all his opinions and feelings, for the work of managing Parliament by means of secret-service money, and of keeping down the people with the bayonet.

With Watergate in mind, we must notice here the emphasis on the unconstitutional nature of the

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corruption that is being condemned: on the perversion, rather than the working, of the system.

When Macaulay says that Fox "entered public life when the standard of integrity among statesmen was low", he is really talking about the working of a system. I have described in *The Kennedy Promise* one aspect of the American system today in terms that are relevant here:

> The fundamental relationship in American politics at the state and city level is that between client and patron: favours are sought, often material ones, and the politician who can promise to supply them is supported, step by step, from the ward committee to the state convention, the promise of favours being exchanged at each step. At the national level in the nominating process, although the relationship between client and patron is not absent, it is no longer the only one, or the most important. Politics have at this point moved to a grander scale, and the relationship which counts most is that which the Romans called *amicitia* or "friendship." . . .

When one says that the first of these relationships, that of client and patron, operates at the state and city level, one is of course also saying that it operates at the Congressional level. Congress is the national culmination of local and state politics, as the Presidency is not. It is the kind of fact that is so obvious that it needs to be recalled, that the national conventions of the major parties play no part in the nomination of the nation's legislators. Congress may be *unum*; it is drawn from the *pluribus*.

WE MAY WISH that the client-patron relationship did not operate in Congress, but we must acknowledge it if we are not to misunderstand the issues of morality that have been raised by Watergate. As long as the political system of the United States is constructed as it is now, the relationship is going to persist. Indeed, one is not sure how a national legislature could operate at all, in a country in which the interests that have to be reconciled are so many, so scattered, and so diverse, without some such relationship. There are bargains to be struck, and Congress is the focal point in the process: the place where the multifarious local and even private interests of the entire nation are brought into an orderly relationship.

Anyone who has observed the working of Congress knows that much of the time of a Representative or Senator is spent in buttonholing his colleagues, to ask for their support in a committee or sub-committee for an appropriation or measure that is desirable for his district or state, in return for the promise of a similar favour that will be given in the future. This is much of the business of Congress, the culmination of the preliminary bargaining that has taken place at a lower level within the constituency of the Representative or Senator. We ought not to feign surprise at it. The representative is meant, after all, to represent the interests of his constituents, within the framework of a national interest that is discovered in the process itself.

Equally, we ought not to allow our fear of "special interests" and their lobbyists to persuade us that the system of barter—for that is what it is—must itself necessarily be corrupt. That a Senator from Texas—L. B. Johnson—supports the oil depletion allowance is as natural as that a Senator from Massachusetts—the Kennedys, in turn—should support the assistance that is needed by the depressed industries of the Northeast, including the claims of an airline to a schedule that it had been refused.

BECAUSE OF THE SIZE AND WEALTH of the United States, and the fact that its centres of power are so much more numerous and less concentrated, the opportunities for corruption are obviously much greater than, say, in Britain. But when, as the Member of Parliament for South Gloucestershire, Anthony Crosland was concerned about the possibility of unemployment among the aircraft workers in his constituency, he pleaded the cause of the aircraft industry; and did so at a national conference of the Labour Party. Why is it any different, why should we be more suspicious, when Henry Jackson, as the Senator from the state of Washington, pleads the cause of the aircraft industry in Seattle, as if he must have been "bought" by Boeing?

That the opportunity of personal corruption lies in the system is obvious enough. The people of the United States are clearly entitled, for example, to ask why someone such as James O. Eastland, the senior Senator from Mississippi, should be able to draw from the Federal government a vast income, accumulating over the years into a vast fortune, for *not* growing crops on his own land, when he has played so prominent a part in the passage of the legislation that makes this possible (as a result of his membership of the Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, of which he is the second ranking member, and of its following sub-committees: Agricultural Production; Marketing and Stabilisation of Prices;

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Agricultural Research and General Legislation; Environment, Soil Conservation and Forestry, of which he is chairman; and Rural Development). This is the kind of thing that Henry Fox would have understood; but it is not really part of the client-patron relationship, since the client and the patron are so obviously joined in the same man.

By and large, however, the rules of the game are understood by the public and observed by the politicians; and, as long as they are the rules of the game, it is not fundamentally a question of morality with which we are presented. This is why the comparison of Richard Nixon with Lyndon Johnson is false, and why it is wrong to say that Watergate is "just politics." If we move to the grander—the Presidential—level of politics, where the relationship of client and patron ought to be superseded by the relationship of *amicitia*, we will be able to see why Watergate has raised questions that are so troubling.

I HAVE QUOTED in *The Kennedy Promise* the description of *amicitia* that is given by Lily Ross Taylor in *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (1949), and there can hardly be a better introduction to a consideration of the *political* character of Richard Nixon:

> *Amicitia* in politics was a responsible relationship. A man expected from his friends, not only support at the polls, but aid in the perils of public life, the unending prosecutions brought from political motives by his personal enemies, his *inimici*, in the contests for office and the manifold rewards of public life. Friendship for the man in politics was a sacred agreement. Cicero, in writing to Crassus to clinch their reconciliation, urged Crassus to consider his letter a treaty. . . .

Favours are still engaged in *amicitia*, but they are political in the truest sense. If a candidate for the Presidency forms an *amicitia* with a governor or a mayor, he enters an alliance in the strictest political meaning: a Kennedy does not buy a Daley, any more than a Daley buys a Kennedy, with a cash payment. They form an *amicitia* that is politically useful to each of them. What they are delivering to each other is political support in a bargain in which the political sanctions are understood.

Richard Nixon has never been capable of *amicitia*, and so his election campaigns—and not only his campaigns, as it now seems clear—have always remained on the level of commercial transactions, and not of the exchange of strictly political favours between men of genuinely political power. We are here at a point which is crucial to an understanding of the man and the politician. His personal friendlessness, on which so much comment has been made, is also a political friendlessness. One has always known this about him; and its meaning has now been revealed.

There never was much news or gossip about how Richard Nixon behaved in the White House, except that he watched football matches and held prayer meetings. But in January of 1973, the *New York Times* was able to carry a special story. On the previous New Year's Eve, it reported, when most people are gathered with their families or their friends, Nixon returned, alone and unannounced, from Camp David to the White House. No one knows why, or what he then did. But he rose the next morning, attended to his toilet, and then strode purposefully to the Oval Office—to find that he could not get in—it was locked. It was only with some difficulty that he could find anyone, on New Year's Day, to open it for him. In the empty White House, he was locked out of his empty office. It was a story, I thought at the time, that had the force of a fable.

It was the time when, after his re-election, he seemed more determined than ever to gather more and more power to the President, in order that the Presidency, and the whole of the executive branch over which it presided, might do less and less. Day by day, he seemed to cause programmes to evaporate, agencies to evaporate, departments to evaporate, the cabinet to evaporate. At one moment, it seemed possible that he might, by executive order, cause even the great fortress of Health-Education-Welfare to evaporate. Indeed, why not the country? Might he not go into it one day, panoplied in the power that he had attracted to his person, to find that his policy of "benign neglect" had been so successful that the country was no longer there, that he had dissolved it; and eccentric scholars in Europe would begin to search for the evidence that the United States had once existed, as they still search for the evidence of Atlantis. It seemed that in time he would make himself, as Milton says of Satan, monarch of an "oblivious pool", sovereign of all that he surveyed, and it would be Void.

AT THE BEGINNING of his first administration, he had presented his cabinet, all of its members

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and all of their wives, to the American people on television. I remember gazing on them, and thinking that they looked like a Committee of Concerned Citizens for Disneyland. But at least they were known. At the beginning of his second administration, he reconstructed his cabinet but did not present it, either its members or its wives, to the people. Indeed, in the character of his appointments, and in the manner in which he made them, he made it clear that he was diminishing the importance and the reputation of the cabinet. It was the first part of America that he was causing to evaporate; and no one was really noticing even the puff of smoke.

THE CABINET as a collective body has always, of course, had an uncertain place in the American political system. But the cabinet as a collection of individual heads of departments has mattered; and, as heads of departments who can be summoned before Congress, it has been a link, even if not an efficient one, between the executive and the legislature. In causing the cabinet to evaporate, he was causing the departments to evaporate; and, in causing the departments to evaporate, he was causing a function of Congress, a part of the Constitution, to evaporate.

A year after his re-election, after less than five years in office, he had wrecked his own cabinet, not once, but again and again: the number of his appointments to individual offices was remarkable. But even this was not the worst of it. He steadily appointed men who had no constituency or even any public standing of their own. A reasonably educated young man today could probably give a list of a cabinet of Franklin Roosevelt at least as easily as of the cabinet of Richard Nixon. The men whom Roosevelt appointed were not faceless, and he advertised them. He gave them territories, in their departments and agencies, for which to fight—and from which to fight each other, and to fight even himself. There was a *government* apart from him.

Nixon has, throughout his career, been able to allow neither political friends nor political rivals to be close to him; in fact, he has never understood that the political friend and the political rival are often the same man. *Amicitia* is formed, as often as not, with a rival; that is why the relationship is responsible, the agreement is sacred. It is relevant and significant that, throughout his career, he has consistently revealed a personal insecurity which explains these inabilities. Pelted by mobs in Latin America when he was Vice-President, he retired to his suite, and locked himself in, afraid and in a sulk, perhaps even whimpering.[1] Defeated in an election in 1962, he squawked, "You don't have Richard Nixon to kick around any more." (His first and fatal reaction to the interest that the press initially showed in Watergate was that it was just kicking him around again.) Victorious in an election in 1972, he could find in his celebratory speech on election night not a word of ordinary, let alone generous, tribute to pay to his defeated opponent.

BUT WHAT MATTERS MOST is that the stinginess in his perceptions of other people, the sourness in his behaviour to them, has always been extended to "the people" themselves. He has never "trusted the people", and this is surely one reason why the people have never shown any firm inclination to extend their trust to him. In 1960, he was defeated when almost any other Republican candidate would probably have won; in 1968, when the Democratic Party was in disarray, he almost lost again, to a candidate who was stained by the failures of the past administration; in 1970, he played on the fears of the nation, but received only a whisper of support in the ballot box in the mid-term elections. In 1972, in spite of all his advantages—the publicity which the Presidency can command; the reduction of the commitment to Viet Nam; the impression which he made by his glamorised visits to China and Russia; an election fund of more than $50,000,000, all of which was spent; and an opponent who was dumb, leading a party that was again in disarray—he achieved only a technical landslide, to the extent that the number of electors who voted was dramatically low, and he made no gains for his party in Congress. Between him and the electors, the exchange of confidence has always been minimal, the support for him grudging.

For this reason, the essence of his campaigns has always been the manipulation, rather than the persuasion, of the electors; and this manipulation became a part of his political character. I emphasise that it is to his political character that I am referring. Of what interest, asked Macaulay, is it that a monarch may be the most loving husband and the most affectionate father

[1] William L. Beaulac (the United States Ambassador to Argentina at the time) has given us a startling and, one must believe, accurate description of that famous journey of Nixon.

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in the world, if he barters away the liberties of the English people? Nixon may be all that he appears to be to Julie Eisenhower (and to her our compassion must be extended); but that cannot be our concern. The character of a politician is to be found in the connection which he makes between the ideals and the realities of political life; in the nature of his relationships with political friends and of his dealings with political rivals; in the manner in which he returns to the people the trust which he invites them to bestow on him; in his sense of the dignity of his office, and his reinforcement of it from day to day with his own dignity; above all, in his awareness that he is the focus, not only of power but of affections, not only of interests but of loyalties, not only of anxieties but of aspirations, not only of functions but of ideals.[2]

In all of these tests, Nixon has failed, not once in his career, but again and again. He has been the most complete exemplar of the mean little description of politics—*Who Gets What, When, and How?*—which American political science took from Harold Lasswell, with it to infect all political discourse in the United States for a generation. But it was not a question of who had got what, when and how, which at last drove the American people into protest last October. All of that he might have been allowed, with a tolerance near to cynicism. When they at last turned on him, unforgiving in their anger, it was over what is more profoundly at stake in politics: the reflection of themselves which they ultimately expect to find in their leaders; the expression of the ideals and the traditions of their country to which they wish ultimately to be able to have recourse; the availability to them of their political system when they ultimately wish to assert themselves by using it as they have been promised is their right. When he had offended the people in each of these respects, Nixon and his staff were taken by surprise at the fury and the steadiness of the popular reaction. It is that, above all, that tells the tale.

THERE CAN BE NO MORALITY in politics—and no possibility of it—if those who hold the highest positions (including their servants) have no sense of *amicitia*, of its meaning in the process of politics, and of the manner in which it extends even to the people as a whole, to help to define and to nourish the relationship that ought to exist between them and their leaders. There has to be some trust, otherwise the barter of politics will become merely the kind of transaction which too many people believe it to be. It has to be a trust between those who from day to day must cooperate, between political rivals as well as political friends, and trust above all in the people, in their ability, as a result of their growth in the habits of free government, to bring to their judgments an equanimity that does not need to be bought.

The man who believes that "everyone has his price" is doomed to ride his tiger for a while, and then to be devoured by it when he discovers too late that it is not true: when he finds (as with many of the White House assistants in Watergate) that they have not really been bought at all, that they will rat. The price that is paid in *amicitia* is not determined by the mechanisms of a market; there is no law of supply and demand by which to calculate. One does not need an alliance with anyone, one needs an alliance with *that* particular man; the approach is made with respect for *his* power and *his* political situation, and he returns the same respect; and the price that is paid is political, is seen in terms not only of the immediate benefits that it will bring, such as the winning of an election, but of the opportunity that it provides to continue, after the election, the pursuit of political objectives that are beyond mere ambition.

George Meany does not "sell" his trade-union influence; Richard Daley does not "sell" his power in Cook County; a George Wallace does not "sell" his votes. That is not what happens in the smoke-filled rooms, or the corridors of Congress, except in the cases, known and unknown, where personal corruption *is* involved. Indeed, nothing is more interesting, at the moment, than to watch the manner in which George Wallace is moving from his previous position of isolation on the national political scene into one in which he realises that *amicitia* is necessary. The price that one can see him beginning to pay is, not of abandoning what he believes, but of bringing what he believes into some kind of reconciliation with what others believe; and it is not improbable that, during the next two years, other politicians will be able to gaze on him, as he on them, and say that there is

[2] I have written before in ENCOUNTER (March 1971) of the delineation of political character by Walter Bagehot; but no one perceived its nature more clearly, and wrote about it more brilliantly, than Macaulay. His historical essays have *casts* of political characters.

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a man with whom *amicitia* is possible, and who will honour its arrangements.

Nixon has never been capable of *amicitia*, and therefore never known the strength of an alliance whose terms can be regarded as sacred, in the sense that was used by Cicero. This is the root of the immorality in his political conduct, which the American people in the end found intolerable. This is also why the picture that we have of the "old Nixon" has always been, and is now, relevant and informing, and why some of us in Washington could not understand the blindness in London and throughout Western Europe to the meaning of Watergate from the start.

The *New Republic* recently re-published an article by Margaret Halsey, which it first printed in 1958 under the title "The Indelible Ink of Character." She was answering those who, even then, were saying that there was a "new" and "mature" Nixon—the words at the time of *The Reporter*—and every word that she then wrote tells with an astonishing precision at this moment:

> Until some absolutely unmistakable portent comes along—such as Mr Nixon's resigning and going to Africa as a missionary—common sense requires the working hypothesis that he has not changed, and is not going to.
>
> To live with him as President, in full awareness of what his actions have shown him to be, will require considerable endurance. . . . There will be a disposition to believe that merely sitting in office with the American flag and the Great Seal of the United States has an ennobling effect. . . . And so they do, but not on confirmed and habitual self-promoters. Forced to adjust to Mr Nixon as Chief Executive, many people will automatically develop a sort of selective morality. They will have one set of ethics—the one they were taught as children and have been used to all their lives—for judging themselves and their friends. They will have another, and a much lower one, for the President. . . .

In one other of her sentences, the whole of Watergate itself seems to be laid out, a decade-and-a-half ago: "Morality provides the fabric of trust which—to put it on the simplest level—enables the host to go into the kitchen and fix drinks in the certain knowledge that his visitors will not read the letters on the desk." Who can believe that that has been the atmosphere in the White House since 1969?

THERE IS ANOTHER ASPECT of the political morality that can be expected, because it is possible, on the grander level of national politics to which I have referred. We expect a politician to grow as his career advances; we expect, and ought to expect, an "ennoblement", a sense of broader horizons, wider opportunities, greater responsibilities. We expect even a sense that the symbolic meaning of his acts has changed. The phrase, "the dignity of the office", has a meaning, and the higher the office, the more pressing the meaning. We expected Earl Warren as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to be *more* and *other* than Earl Warren as Governor of California; and we were not disappointed.

To find a county surveyor with his hand in the till is one thing; to find the same man with his hand in the till—indeed, still in the same till—when he is Vice-President of the United States is not at all the same kettle of fish. In both cases, the fish may stink, but the stink is different in our nostrils. The questions about the man in the first case are simple; in the second case, one hardly knows what questions about him one can even begin by asking. Even at the most practical level—that of the "common sense" of the "hard-headed businessman" who "sees things as they are," and who gamely tried to stand by Richard Nixon and his administration—one wants to know how Spiro Agnew was able to persuade himself that it was necessary for him to stuff petty cheques into his drawer in the Executive Office Building. Petty bribery at that level has a special squalor, beside which the grand larceny of a Henry Fox has at least some awful effulgence; and the feeling never quite leaves one that the White House of Nixon and Agnew was really the White House of Bonnie and Clyde, government by stick-up.

But it has, of course, been worse than that; and this is why the *extent* of the involvement of Richard Nixon has never been the real issue. The suit that has been heard against him before the American people has not been a criminal prosecution. As long as Watergate was seen in those terms, just another Teapot Dome, the American people did not arrive in the public arena to join in the charges. The accusation against him has been more grave: that he was grossly derelict in the trust that was delegated to him by "We, the People" in their most solemn act, and grossly deficient in his understanding of the nature of that trust. The evidence on that issue was there for a long time. Even if one had accepted each (latest) explanation and each (latest) denial that he offered at its face value, he would still have stood accused and convicted in terms of his oath, and of the meaning that is attached to it

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by the people before whom it was sworn. He upheld neither the Constitution, nor the laws of the country, nor the dignity of his office: and cannot be shown to have done so even by his own words.

ON THE CONTRARY, his words and actions, month after month, have demonstrated only that he is profoundly unaware of the exceptional and outrageous nature of the things that his administration did with or without his active compliance; and perhaps even that he is incapable of realising it. The only reassurance that the American people might at one stage have accepted—the reassurance for which they looked —was that, whatever might have been done in the past, he would not, in repairing the damage, resort to excuse and evasion, but would exhibit his own sense of outrage at the uses to which the office of the President had been put under his administration. At no time, no matter what (even on his own evidence) he has known or not known, has he exhibited any such sense, or even the capacity for it; and the accent in the transcripts, rather than the details, only confirmed this.

It would have been difficult for him to do so; many would have been unconvinced; he might not have saved himself or his own reputation. But he could have rescued for the office of the President the feeling of the American people that it is one of exceptional trust, and for the American people the feeling that the office of the President cannot be wholly estranged from them, that any man whom they elect to the office will have some sense of its dignity, the dignity in the day-to-day exercise of great power that is in itself a form of tempering it, and of resisting the temptations to its misuse. The dignity, and the sense of it, is not just symbolic. When we say "That is not how a President ought to behave", we are expressing the expectation that the President also will say to himself from time to time, "That is not how a President ought to behave." The ennoblement that we expect in him is in part no more than his own sense of the elevation of the office: to put it simply, that it "stands out."

BEFORE THE REVELATIONS of Watergate, but while John Mitchell was still the Attorney-General of the United States, I tried to indicate what I meant by this tempering effect of a sense of dignity on the holder of a great office. During the first of the television debates in 1960 between John Kennedy and Richard Nixon, it seemed as if Kennedy had given the less liberal answer to a question about the "Communist subversive activities" in America. I commented in *The Kennedy Promise* that it would have been

> . . . a foolish liberal who, on the basis of such an exchange, was willing to entrust the appointment of, say, an Attorney-General of the United States to Richard Nixon rather than to John Kennedy. If for no other reason, John Kennedy had an inborn sense of dignity, perhaps his most remarkable quality, which would not have permitted him to tolerate, under his Presidency, the laws and the institutions of which he was the chief magistrate being used to scurrilous ends; he stood much on protocol.

This is a judgment of political character, and the morality that is possible in politics is unlikely to be found in a political character whose sense of the protocol of his office is slight.

More recently, as he mused on Watergate, a close assistant to Lyndon Johnson while he was in the White House contrasted his manner with that of Nixon. There were evenings, he said, when Johnson would talk in his usual expansive way about the great power that was at his disposal, and how it could be used to cow his political enemies. What weapon was *not* available today to a President of the United States? But no one in the room thought that he was being serious. It never crossed anyone's mind, least of all Johnson's, that he was talking of actual options. But of course we can't do things like that, he would say with a laugh, a President can't behave like that. Because such power was available to him, he was bidden not to use it. He had reached to the dignity of the office, and his actions were tempered by his sense of it.

TO LOOK FOR THE POSSIBILITY of morality in the actual working of the political process is, of course, to look for it in the liveliness of the political institutions of the country, and their own tempering of the exercise of great power; and on the importance of one of these institutions, the political party, Watergate has thrown much illumination. One of the most important facts in the whole story is that those people who have so far been shown, or appear, to be guilty of wrongdoing do not include any senior—even any junior—officials of the Republican Party, acting in that capacity. In particular, the "establishment" of the Republican Party seems to have clean hands.

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To understand why this is so important, we must stand back. It used to be said that one of the tasks confronting Nixon when he took office in 1969 was to prove that the Republican Party was able to govern; that it was, at the national level, a governing party. It was then still regarded, and regarded itself, as an opposition party, outside the mainstream of American politics—or, rather, of the course into which the mainstream had flowed in the past generation. It was in the first years of his administration that many commentators, various in their ingenuity, kept on discovering a "Southern Strategy" or an "Emerging Republican Majority" or a "Real Majority", which Nixon had created, or on which he could rely, and which promised to make the Republicans once more the governing party.

The exclusion of the Republican Party from the White House, from 1933 to 1953, had profoundly affected what the people in general thought of it, and what it thought of itself. After all, much in the world had changed in those years. It was not, when Dwight Eisenhower took office, the world that had been known to Herbert Hoover; and the changes, as Eisenhower discovered, even if he had been prepared to exert himself to that purpose, could not be reversed. Moreover, his Presidency was so personal—in the popular support which he attracted, and in his organisation of the White House—that his eight years in the White House seemed to be merely an interregnum in the long mid-century domination of American politics by the Democratic Party.

With his departure, the Republican Party had to try to return to power as itself. In 1960, it really did not have a choice in determining who should be its candidates, it was almost bound to take Nixon because of his long service as Vice-President. In 1972, it did not have a choice either; it was bound to take him because he was already President. But in 1964 and again in 1968, the choice was open; and on both occasions the "establishment" of the Republican Party was boxed out of the ring, first by Barry Goldwater, and then by Richard Nixon.

They were both "non-establishment" candidates. Each of them moved to the nomination without the support of, and even in opposition to, the "Eastern Establishment." If he had been able to be as explicit, Nixon could have said with Goldwater that the Eastern Seaboard should be sawn off and floated out to sea. The persistent defeats of the Scrantons, the Rockefellers, and the Romneys—powerful as they seemed, impotent as they proved—*was* the story of the Republican Party in the 1960s. Nixon seemed only to be rubbing home the point when, during his first term, he devalued the men in his cabinet who were prominent in the party: Robert Finch, John Volpe, George Romney. The revelations of Watergate have clarified the situation. The two groups of people who have been most directly under investigation have been the personal staff at the White House and the Committee to Re-elect the President. In neither of them did the Republican Party have any real existence; from both of them, indeed, it was deliberately all but excluded.

The political scientists Aaron Wildavsky and Nelson W. Polsby, in one of the finest examinations of the significance of Watergate that has yet been published in the United States, have acutely observed:

> The institutional lesson to be learned from these events, we believe, is not that the Presidency should be diminished, but that other institutions should grow in stature. The first order of priority should go to rebuilding our political parties, because they are most in need of help and could do most to bring Presidents in line with strong sentiments in the country.

They are right—absolutely right—but one has to observe that this is a voice that has not been heard for a long time in the political science or the political journalism of the country.

The political life of the United States is disjointed enough; and the major parties, which ought to provide at least some of the continuity that is needed, are tragically weak. The parties are the missing link in the working of the political process; they are scorned and misunderstood and neglected. "Americans are growing painfully aware of the advantages of the parliamentary system", the historian Page Smith has written in response to Watergate; but that is not the point. The parties are there to be used within the American system as the American people were once accustomed to using it. They are the instrument that is available which has not been employed, says David Broder, in a book which he nevertheless entitles *The Party's Over*.

THE DISDAIN FOR, and lack of understanding of, the two major parties may be seen most easily in the reporting, in the past few years, of the national conventions. What possible justification is there, for example, for sending Norman Mailer

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to report a political convention? In his famous set-pieces, he reveals an ignorance of the political process that is as fatuous as it is irresponsible. The actors whom he describes, the ordinary delegates and the powerful figures, seem to have come from nowhere, to have reached the convention as the result of no process. They are only actors, on a set in a studio, where they arrive, assume their roles, play their parts, and at once, when it is done, the set is struck. *Esquire* in 1968 went one—or, rather, two—worse than Mailer himself: it invited William Burroughs and Jean Genet to report the conventions. From both they got a pernicious ignorance.

This kind of reporting has its influence, and it is worth examining in its master. If one turns to Norman Mailer's account of the Goldwater convention in 1966, one notices immediately a trick in his style. The things and people that he describes are always said to be "like" something else: "like the vents in a portable radio . . . like a child's nursery . . . like the graduating class of a high school in Nebraska . . . like orange candy . . . like a cold cut set in the white tray of a refrigerator . . . like a fly annealed on the light bulb of a refrigerator . . . like a saint . . . like a man who had been handsome once . . . like a marsh into which he disappeared twitch by twitch . . . like hundred-dollar newlywed sofas dirty in a day . . . like divinity students who had been expelled from the seminary . . . like bright young district attorneys"; and so it goes on. The effect is flashy, it is no more. The similes are the device either of a tired writer, or of one who knows, and knows that he knows, almost nothing of what he is describing. In most cases, they are the only descriptions he offers. Since he knows next to nothing of politics, all he can do is look at faces: "you could tell a lot by looking at the faces . . . that sort of face . . . faces like theirs." Why not just write: "Goldwater with a face like a senator from Arizona"?

On this threadbare canvas Mailer paints his personal visions: "was there indeed a death in the seed which had brought us here? was the country extraordinary or accursed? . . . the Wagnerian drama of the WASP . . . the Faustian rage of a white civilization." What has any of this to do with a party convention? Does any of it tell us why and how Goldwater was able to capture his party's nomination? What took place was neither extraordinary nor accursed. The forces of one wing of the Republican Party had used the resources of the party's constitution with more determination and skill than any other wing, just as the forces of George McGovern, eight years later, used the resources of the new constitution of the Democratic Party with more determination and skill than any other candidate. This is what needs to be described, so that people may grow familiar with the resources of their institutions, and confident that they are accessible to them to use to their benefit.

WHEN I FIRST VISITED the United States in 1965, five months after the defeat of Barry Goldwater, I was told by American political commentators on every side that the Republican Party would be out of the White House for a generation. I did not believe it at the time; and four years later, of course, a Republican was back in the White House. In the same way, four years after the defeat of George McGovern in an election in which he carried only one state, the Democratic Party may well return to the White House at the next election. Should not all of this tell us something?—that the major parties have their roots deep in the country's life, and that there they have a firm hold on what is actual in it. From time to time, they may be disrupted as violently as the Republicans in 1964 and the Democrats in 1972; but they pull themselves together once more, not untouched by their experience, but adding it to the store of their already accumulated experience of the democratic way in politics.

The responsibility from which Richard Nixon cannot escape is that he created, and sought to create, a White House and through it a Committee to Re-elect the President, which scorned his own party. This friendless man had to make his office friendless; and that is exactly what happened to him and to it. The metaphor of *amicitia* is not facile; and it is in parties that it is formed and regulated, so that it becomes a more than merely personal bargain. This is again the interest of George Wallace's manoeuvres at this moment; he is not just seeking *amicitia*, he is seeking it within the Democratic Party to which he has returned.

THE MAJOR PARTIES are not mass institutions, an almost century-old myth that needs to be cleared away. They are not, in the Western democracies, mass parties that will be oligarchic at best, or authoritarian at worst. Their popular

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support is not mass support, but a number of constituencies, with interests and aspirations that are distinct; their leadership is not a politbureau, executing a single will or even a general one, but a number of personalities who not merely differ but differ before the public. They are differentiated but not isolated—the particular constituencies in the support from below, the individual personalities in the leadership at the top—and that is a mark of a public, not a mass.

One of the functions of a political party, for example, is to bring forth and sustain in public life the public men whom we need. No other institutions in our society are today capable of doing that. We no longer have a church which can create public men for us; businessmen have ceased to be public; scientists who wish to be public men find that instead all that they can become is celebrities, and writers are in much the same position. Celebrities are creatures of the mass, and only our politicians are public men and not celebrities. The feature about "People" which is published each week in *Time* is a page of titbits about celebrities, and politicians are rarely part of it. Politicians do not often appear on the television talk shows.

Goldwater is a public man, he is not a celebrity; and he is sustained in public life by his party. He was the instrument of humbling it at one election, but it found a place for him at the next; and from that place he has become one of its elders. During the past year, he has been a figure of reassurance to a wide variety of people. Independent, with no ambition now but to be a senator, bearing no malice to anyone, his decency a password, he has been able to speak well to those who have been bewildered. It was a surprise to no one that he accompanied the two Republican leaders in the Senate and the House of Representatives when they at last told Nixon that his position had become untenable. This is what one means by a public man, by the value of the party that sustains him, and by the continuity that the party has in its own existence. At one time, Goldwater took leave of his senses. But he is not judged by that alone; he is sustained for what else is of worth in him; and the uses of that worth have been demonstrated convincingly in the past year.

Similarly, throughout his long career, the Democratic Party has sustained in public life the senior Senator from North Carolina. He has resisted the legislation, first of civil rights for the blacks, and then of equal rights for women, and he has appealed to the Constitution in doing so. He was an obvious example, it used to be said, of the evils of the seniority system which gave him the chairmanship of the Judiciary Committee. But all at once, he becomes Sam Ervin, hero if not saint, quoting the Constitution like a scripture against the President. It is for these occasions that public men are sustained in the public life of the country by the major parties; we do not know when we will need them, we do not know whom one day we will need.

One cannot slice a Goldwater or an Ervin into good cuts which one will buy, and poor cuts which one will disdain. Sam Ervin may in the past have appealed to the Constitution against blacks and women; but he also appealed to it in resisting—all but single-handed when it came to the crunch—the bill by which Nixon sought to give extraordinary powers to the police in the District of Columbia to employ against the individual citizen. Whatever else may be said of his handling of the Select Committee on the Presidential Campaign—and it was by no means faultless—no one can deny that he was speaking from a consistent record as a public man who has never in the public arena shown any inclination to cut the corners of public life.

To him, as Arthur M. Schlesinger jr. has said, the Constitution is as alive and fresh as if he had just walked over from the Convention at Philadelphia. They argued at that Convention about the meaning of the Constitution that they were making; and many who have applauded Ervin during the past year may argue about its meaning with him again. A document like the Constitution of the United States—but there is, of course, no other document like it—is there to be used, to support a strong Presidency when that is felt to be necessary, to oppose one when it is felt to offend. What matters is that the public life of the country should sustain men who are of both persuasions, in association with each other; and this is the work of the major parties.

IT HAS a moral effect. Morality is our attitudes and behaviour to what is other than ourselves, and the parties force the politician into association with other politicians, the interests of his constituency into association with the interests of other constituencies; even into association with the dead, as Burke would have put it, with custom and tradition and habitual ways of doing things. Parties can warn and advise, correct and discipline and temper. The

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man who cannot live closely with his party will usually be found to be one whose own moralising in fact resists the moral influence of association with others. This has been true of George Wallace in the past (and may yet be found to be still true); and it is true—perhaps it is the ineradicable flaw in him—of Enoch Powell.

The loner in politics is always to be distrusted. At some time or another, he will be found to be up to no good, to be resorting to a ruse. No matter how high-principled he may be, he does not have the resources to accomplish what he will without intrigue. Any estimate of Enoch Powell must take into account that, through the years, he has been a participant in, sometimes the centre of, most of the serious intrigues in the Conservative Party against its leaders. He has some of the characteristics of Bolingbroke who (in the words of Philip Cressy Yorke) "only attacked party government because he was excluded from it", and the case is not altered because his exclusion was to some extent his own doing. When Bolingbroke wrote to Swift that his "fortune turned rotten the moment it grew ripe", he was speaking as the loner who ultimately has no other resource but intrigue; and who is doomed to find that he who lives by intrigue will at the moment of his success usually be undone by it.

SEPARATED FROM the Republican Party, largely because they separated themselves, Nixon and the Committee to Re-elect the President were forced into actions that are perhaps most simply described as intrigue, rather than as corruption. One of the characteristics of the intriguer is that, since his own behaviour is bound to cause suspicion, he suspects all men. He does not have opponents, he has only enemies; and few things are more disturbing in the whole of the Watergate story than the revelation of the lists of political enemies that the White House was always compiling. It is again one of the moral influences of party government, of association with others, that political opponents can and do co-exist without regarding each other as political enemies. It was a relief to hear Gerald Ford, in his first address to the two Houses of Congress, refer carefully and with emphasis to political *adversaries* with whom some normal relationship is possible.

WE MAY NOW RETURN to the more specific lessons to be learned from Watergate; and, having to some extent exonerated the Republican Party, it must now be criticised. Although the massive political contributions of many corporations and industries went directly to the Committee to Re-elect the President, and not to the Republican Party, this blatant corruption of the political process did not take place in a vacuum. What has been vividly confirmed, for it is hardly a revelation, is that the relations of the Republican Party to big business are of a different degree and therefore of a different quality than those of the Democratic Party. This would not in itself be alarming—corporate interests are as entitled as any other to have a special relationship with a political party—as long as the Republican Party was chary of the relationship.

Among all the reasons that might be given to explain why the Republican Party has not proved itself to be a governing party, on the national level, during this century, the most important is that it does not really believe in the ultimate supremacy of politics, of the political process. Democrats are much more political creatures than are Republicans. The autobiography of Calvin Coolidge, which is in many ways a fascinating document, is hardly about politics at all; at a moment of crisis, Herbert Hoover did not really have any faith in political action; General Eisenhower was of course not a politician; and Richard Nixon demonstrated, not only in his electoral politics but in his neglect of domestic policy, that he does not believe in the efficacy of the political process to intervene in the economic arrangements of society.

As inflation again galloped this summer, and the Dow Jones averages plunged to their lowest level for four years, it was an investment banker who on television said that the main explanation was the lack of political leadership at Washington. He was calling for intervention, but Nixon refused to act. Politics is powerless, he seemed to say, and his co-ordinator of economic policy at the White House—what policy was there for him to co-ordinate?—was left pleading for a return on the part of private citizens to the "old-time religion", to which Mike Mansfield gave the Democratic—the political—response when he said, "There's a saying that goes with that: God helps those who help themselves."

TO EXPLAIN FULLY the unpolitical nature of the Republican Party would require an examination of the nature of American conservatism. One is unceasingly aware in the United States of the

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importance of what may be called the Tory element in the conservative tradition and the Conservative Party in Britain—partly because of its connections, actual or nostalgic, with the landed interest as an ideological opponent of the business interest, its distaste for "trade"; and partly because of its belief in strong central government as such, in what used to be represented by the monarchy, its looking to the "Crown." Tories have always been political creatures, like the Democrats; and this is one reason why the Tory in the United States feels at home with the Democratic Party, but regards the Republican Party at first with disbelief, then with suspicion, and finally with dismay at its refusal to behave as a political animal.

Irving Kristol, who was being announced two years ago as one of the most influential spokesmen of a new intellectually respectable conservatism in the United States (and as the favourite intellectual of Richard Nixon, a title some of us would go to some lengths to forswear), has in a number of articles in the *Wall Street Journal* tried to explain—as one would expect of him, he has not tried to duck—his reactions to Watergate, in the light of the fact that at the 1972 election he publicly flourished his support for Nixon's candidature. In one of his apologias, he said that one of the most tragic aspects of Watergate was that it had set back the conservative cause in America just when it was advancing. But, apart from the fact that the political character of Nixon was as well known in 1972 to Kristol as to anyone, what one must ask him is whether the conservative cause in America, as it is represented in the Republican Party, is something to which a conservative political thinker can easily lend his support. Does it not lack any body of genuinely political ideas because it lacks any belief in politics? Until the Republican Party is ready to give to the political process the ultimate supremacy, especially over economics, that it should enjoy, it will remain insupportable by all except the interests that it protects, and none of the strategies that I have mentioned, designed to bring the "emerging Republican majority" into existence, will succeed. The United States is today in no position to afford a governing party that will not govern.

MASSIVE CORRUPTION of a major party and of the political process by big business, such as the bargain struck with the dairy industry, is possible only if a party (or an administration) has no feel for the resources of the political process and for the restraints that it imposes, not least so that the political role may itself be protected. The rules of the game are meant, not only to ensure fairness between the parties and politicians, but to enable those responsible for the political process to resist more effectively than they otherwise might the importunacy of "special interests." But one cannot look for this resistance to a party which instinctively feels that businessmen in some way know better than politicians what is good for the country.

This is especially true at the national or Presidential level. We already know the size of the funds that are being collected by "special interests", including the trade unions, to distribute to candidates in the mid-term elections; and one suspects that not many candidates will disdain this support. But it is just because Congress is the representative of special as well as local interests that it is all the more essential that the head of the executive branch, where the great departments also have their constituencies of special interests, should hold himself as free as possible from bargains so that he may retain his own independence of political action in the national interest as he conceives it. It was the directness of the bargain between some corporations and industries *and the President* that shocked. The White House, the President himself, even the private lawyer of the President, were all too directly involved.

ONE OF THE MOST STARTLING revelations in the Watergate evidence has been the extent to which the language and manners of commerce, not least those of commercial espionage, were naturally employed by men such as John Ehrlichman and John Mitchell, the second of whom (as one of his convicted colleagues has said) was a "typical corporate lawyer and ought to have remained a typical corporate lawyer; he should not have been in politics." But the depth of the corruption of the political process by these attitudes was best demonstrated by Ehrlichman.

When he appeared before the Special Committee of the Senate, and was being questioned about the break-in to the office of the psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg, he was asked if he did not think that the old English adage that an Englishman's home is his castle expressed a right that belonged to every citizen in America as well. He threw back his head, and said, "Oh! but that's been eroded." Questioned later about the com-

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pilation of detailed reports on the private lives of individuals who were perceived as political enemies, he said with an equal insouciance: "It's done by insurance companies every day." It seemed not to have occurred to him that people elect a government, in part, to help stop the erosion of their rights, to interfere with insurance companies when they molest the citizen, and not to imitate their methods and use them as a justification.

At least since the New Deal, there have been corporate lawyers in Democratic administrations —some of them have been key figures in the political life of the country for many years—but they have all behaved as if they were in a different world, not still in that of the corporations: as if they were subject, because they were willing to subject themselves, to the conditions imposed by the political process. In fact, they became political creatures also, as the Democratic Party is a political animal; and this has not been true of the four Republican administrations since 1952.

THE SECOND LESSON is subtly related. When I took part in a seminar on "The Crisis of the Presidency" at the New School of Social Research last November, the one point on which the five panelists were agreed was that something has gone awry with the nominating process that culminates in the national conventions of the two parties. It has become possible for candidates to win the nomination almost from outside their parties. They either personally possess (Kennedy) or collect personally (Nixon) a large amount of money, and with it—this is what matters—they form a personal entourage that not only runs the nomination campaign, which is understandable, and not only then runs the election campaign with as little association with the established organs of the party as possible, but is then transferred, if the candidate is elected, to the White House, still a personal entourage, owing loyalty to only one man, to govern the country.

Many years before Watergate, I criticised the dominance of the personal staffs in the White House as a form of eunuch rule. The emperors of Turkey and China liked to rest their governments on eunuchs, whom they had raised from poverty and obscurity, partly because their backgrounds ensured that they would not become rivals, and partly because they could not generate a line of succession of their own. The alacrity with which thousands of young men pleaded to be castrated, so that they might enter the service of the emperor, was the cause in some periods of such a superfluity of them that they became an aggrieved minority of the unemployed, and even of the unemployable. It is a plight which reminds one a little of that of the "in-and-outers", as they have been called,[3] who come to Washington to serve one President, depart with his administration, seek employment elsewhere until they are called once more by another President, and then depart again with him, again to seek employment.

Party government is the opposite of eunuch rule. The parties have backgrounds and continuity; the politicians, sustained in public life by the parties, have pasts and futures. They both have constituencies. If either of them, party or politician, wishes to continue, they must each use the political process in all its resourcefulness, have their ears to the ground, gather in smoke-filled rooms, meet in the washrooms on Capitol Hill, and studiously obey a score of the other conventions of party politics. In this way, they are kept in touch with what they need to know, not least with the limits as well as the resources of the political process. They do not think they can just do anything.

But none of this is true of the eunuch rule of the personal entourages which now move into the White House. Many of the convicted or indicted members of the personal staff of Nixon have said that their main error was that they were willing to do for their President whatever it seemed necessary to do. This attitude could not have prevailed if the President's men had had some close association with the party of which he is supposed to be at least the titular head. At some point, someone would have said to them, "But we don't do it like that—we didn't even do it like that in the days of President Harding, rest his soul. . . ."

THE PERVERSION of the nominating process may be seen also in the campaign of Nixon's opponent in 1972. Once again, George McGovern won the nomination almost from outside his party, using the new constitution for which he had been responsible in such a way that at the national convention the party was in effect dismissed, and

[3] I first heard the phrase from Adam Yarmolinsky, and believed that it was his coinage, until Richard Neustadt laid claim to it. Wherever the credit lies, it is a telling phrase.

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he could not get it back. One shudders to think what his personal entourage would have done to the country if it had been elevated to the White House, despising the political process which they would have seemed to have by-passed. (As it happened, it was the party machines of Kennedy in Massachusetts and of Daley in Cook County that gave McGovern his only worthwhile successes.) Moreover, one must notice again how personal was the initial support that McGovern attracted. It has sometimes appeared in recent years that the wealthy and the chic in New York have given up collecting painters in order to collect Presidential candidates: instead of a Matisse or a Mondrian, they now possess a McCarthy or a McGovern; and it seems that they are today throwing their money—hardly their weight—behind a third M (Mondale) who is as likely a loser as the previous two.

It is characteristic of a liberal Republican such as Lowell P. Weicker, a member of the Special Committee of the Senate, that in his personal report on Watergate, he should suggest that Presidential candidates be nominated by national primaries. The fact is that the nominating process has already too much of the character of a national primary. The candidates try to arrive at the national conventions to win on the first, at worst on the second, ballot, and, from a Kennedy to a McGovern, a Goldwater to a Nixon, they succeed. There is none of the tussle, the succession of ballots, that accompanied the nomination of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932; and what those tussles, the roll-calls and the stampedes, showed was that the party was alive and performing its function, pitting man against man, interest against interest, constituency against constituency, machine against machine, state against state, until there emerged a candidate who had some awareness of the diversity of his support, the nature of the coalition he had put together, and the complexity and thoroughness of the political process he seeks to control.

The national conventions have been tidied up for the television cameras; and that is a folly. But the ailment is deeper than that. In the rehabilitation of the major parties in the political process, it is urgently necessary that the national conventions be strengthened, and their proper function be restored to them of choosing a candidate, instead of merely endorsing one who has been selected even before the convention has met, largely as the result of the manipulation of popular votes by a personal entourage that has very few links with the regular party forces that he will need.

IT IS RIDICULOUS that a candidate's chances of being nominated in July or elected in November can be dashed for ever by a popular vote in New Hampshire in March or Wisconsin in April. In this way, good men are eliminated before the party itself has the time or opportunity to form its own judgment, even before the candidate has had the chance to prove himself as a candidate. Once again, an intended reform—the state primaries—can be seen to double back on itself and work to cross purposes. The popular vote is allowed to enter the process at far too early a stage, and to enter it, not only before the issues have been defined and the political character of the man has been fully demonstrated, but at a time when the emphasis is on a personal candidate trying to capture a party, and not on a candidate whom the party has itself brought forth.

Moreover, there is a specific way in which the rehabilitation of the parties in the nominating process would be likely to have a moral influence. If the purpose of the candidate is, not to attract a large popular vote in a series of tormentingly expensive primaries but to lock together a coalition of known individuals and known groups in the party itself, the cost of a nomination campaign is at once reduced. The importance of television is diminished, teams of advance men are unnecessary, the candidate does not have to fly around the country with a retinue of servants; in fact, the role of the personal entourage is lessened at once. It does not, after all, cost a penny for someone to be elected leader of one of the major parties in Britain, because he is chosen by the Parliamentary party, where the popular voice does not reach and that is where he should be chosen. Given the essential divorce of Congressional from Presidential politics in the United States, the only place where a similar process can be made to work is in the national conventions of the parties, freed from the direct influence of the popular vote.

Moreover, the same kind of effect would be observed even in the election campaign. If one is fully the candidate of a party, with the party at one's back, one does not need a lot of men out front, trying to pick up money and support, wherever and however these may be found. A party can provide machinery and workers, and provide these locally to a large extent on an un-

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paid basis, even if the volunteers, like the municipal workers in Cook County, may seem to have been given no alternative. When a Kennedy or a McGovern asks Mayor Daley to hold Chicago, they can leave it to him; and he does. Given the position and power and influence of Nixon in 1972, the Committee to Re-elect the President can have thought it needed $50,000,000 only because it did not turn to the party.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER LESSONS, of course, but I wish to remain with my main theme, because it is only within that theme that all the other lessons can be comprehended. A party is a public, as I have said, even a coalition of publics. But the denial that a public can exist in a mass society has formed a significant part of the political literature of the past forty years, especially in the United States. It must be remembered that a brilliant group of intellectual immigrants—the Peter Gayeté, if one may so put it, of the Weimar Republic—arrived in America after 1933 and, in the process of their own naturalisation, naturalised some of the ideas which they had brought with them. "Alienation" was one of them; and so was the related idea of "the masses." In one way or another, thinkers such as Emil Lederer and Hannah Arendt, Erich Fromm and Herbert Marcuse, four names out of three hundred, wrote the public out of existence. In their own works, and in the literature that they influenced, we have been left to contemplate the individual, alone and estranged, in the mass, with no conception of the public which is their mediator. In fact, the theme of Dr Arendt in her still influential work, *The Human Condition*, is that it is no longer possible for a public to exist.

The society of the masses is likely to lead to totalitarianism, they said; that was what had happened in Europe; they had made Hitler, and they had made Stalin; it was even argued that in America they had made Joe McCarthy. On both sides of the Atlantic—in the British Museum, with his own inspiration, J. L. Talmon worked on a variation—it was a seductive theme. In the 1940s and the 1950s, the idea spread into the political science, the sociology, the pop sociology, the journalism, of the United States; into the public mind of the whole country. "We, the People" vanished from the public discourse; and the concern became, not how the people should govern themselves, but how they should be governed. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that, during this time, political thinking in America had a single obsession: that the "authoritarian personality" which is inherent in "the masses" must be checked by "governing élites."

I am saying, not that the masses do not exist but that the mass is not the only pattern into which great numbers of people are able to arrange themselves. Indeed, as their critics say, the masses are formless. But in the mass, from time to time, one can see a public, even *the* public, assume a shape and find a voice. The voice is single, not because it is uniform, but because many are united. When one notices the public, one sees that a large number of people have arrived in the public arena from different places, at different times, with different interests, from different motives. They have none of the character of a mass; they also are differentiated but not isolated. They have a pattern, are there for a purpose, and know how to behave; and the individual is present as he is not in the mass.

BUT THE PUBLIC WAS LOST in the obsession of an influential group of American intellectuals with the masses and their authoritarian personality, which formed the common thread in a collection of their essays, *The Radical Right*, which Richard Hofstadter edited during the 1950s. There was no American historian whom one read more eagerly, and his premature death was a tragedy. His work was invigorating, but increasingly it was not so much wrong as perverse. More and more, he looked for *themes* in American history, especially intellectual themes, and then fitted his story to them.

The general theme which came to embrace all his particular themes was his almost obsessive desire to question, if possible to reject, the traditional "democratic" or "liberal" or "progressive" interpretation of American history. An outstanding example of his influence in this respect was his re-interpretation of the Populist and Progressive movements. Other historians (and social scientists and political scientists) grasped at his revision as yet another proof of the anti-intellectualism, the authoritarianism, the nativism, the primitivism, the chauvinism, the anti-Semitism, even the fascism, of American popular movements. If one believed it all, it seemed that the Constitution of the United States should be rewritten: "We, the people of the United States, being proven fascist by nature, hereby renounce in the titles of this Constitution

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our right to govern ourselves, and commit the safety of this country and the welfare of its people to an intellectual élite. . . ."

It did not, of course, take that form. The form that it did take was the growth of one of the most astonishing ideas which dominated American political science in the 1950s, the belief that the survival of a free society depended on the apathy—the non-participation—of the majority of the people. Enough has been said, however, to show how formidable, stretching into disciplines, was the body of anti-democratic ideas that seized the intellectual life of America during the 1950s. It was inevitable that a counter-attack should come. But as I have demonstrated before,[4] the New Left scholars threw away their opportunity. Their intellectual shallowness and philosophical caprice meant that they ravaged the ground that they might have occupied. For it was wide open to them.

ONE LAST INFLUENCE, at which I already have hinted, must be mentioned: the argument that politics is about "Who gets what, when, how." (Some of us would say that "Why?" is the more interesting and significant question, and that it is as political as the others. It is also more philosophical, but political science in America does not pay much attention to political philosophy.) Of course it is a part of politics, but it is not the only part, not always the most important, and it never stands in isolation from the ideals and the more than merely material aspirations by which people are moved. To reduce the activity and the conversation of politics to considerations only of allocation, whether of resources or power, was—and I choose the words carefully—a moral disaster in the intellectual life of the country, with a profound influence in its political life, which all too obviously has not yet been erased.

If the faith of the American people in their democracy and its promise has been soured, if their attitude to the public life of the country has become surly and cynical, at least a part of the blame—I am inclined in some respects to say the greater part—must be placed on the American intellectuals, "right" and "left", who in two generations have worked to undermine its intellectual justifications, and have met with little intellectual resistance.

But what is absurd is that Nixon has believed it all. He may not have read the books, or have any direct knowledge of their themes. But there he is: the self-consciously alienated man, friendless and separated and lonely, in whom the rejection of community is absolute: regarding "We, the people" only as a mass to be manipulated, never as a public, even less as a number of publics, to be persuaded and led; the most practised exponent over many years, knowing no other, of the politics of "Who gets what, when, how." Every miscalculation he has made—the reason why he has not redeemed his reputation in office as he had hoped to do, why he has not written himself (or talked himself by voice-activated tape) into history as a great statesman—may be traced to one or all of these elements. Here profoundly is the source of the immorality.

FOR LET US CONSIDER the "We, the people" of the United States at this moment. There can be no morality in politics unless they are honoured, unless we say—intellectual or politician—these have earned our trust. One knows every fault in them; they are not to be worshipped. One is not inclined like Henry Wallace to award them a century of their own as the "common man." They are careless of what they do not know; but of what they know they are careful. They have affections which they guard, and do not readily call to the surface. But when at last they speak they do so with a distinctness that is more than the mere articulacy that they lack; and they arrive in the arena as individuals in a public, and not as a mob or a mass.

For half a century, since the depression, they have been buffeted, subject to an endless succession of provocations, but even amid the alarums and excursions they have in the end steadied themselves. They have been called out of their isolation; twice in thirty years they saved the Old World. For thirty years more they have been the upholders of what Henry Kissinger calls the legitimate world order, until the revolutionary powers themselves, Russia and China, have been persuaded that, in the absence of "an international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy", even their own existence becomes unbearably insecure. There have been errors, in attitude and policy; but through it all the people of America have remained steady in their support of what must be regarded as one of the most significant achieve-

[4] "American Chronicle: Years of Intellectual Havoc", ENCOUNTER, September 1972.

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ments of a great power in the history of the world: the restoration of the legitimacy of the world order in a century of holocaust and revolution.

WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE? More than 40 million immigrants in the past century; two-thirds of these in this century alone; more than 3 million in the past decade. Today there are almost 35 million people who are of foreign white stock, either native-born or themselves immigrants; and if we added to those the grandchildren of immigrants the numbers would amaze. Under such an impact, which is so recent, the country could be expected, not merely to be turbulent but to fall apart, its institutions to have fallen. But the nation is there, not failing to act as a nation in moments of crisis, some new reserve, even as now, found in its institutions, a resource in the Constitution, buried and neglected, that is still available to be used.

For the past twenty years, since the decision of the Supreme Court in *Brown* v *Board of Education*, an actual revolution, not an evolution, has been worked in the land, among these people. There has been violence, certainly there is more to be accomplished, to every advance there has been resistance, and many of the most advertised advances have been false starts in the wrong direction. Yet the black is not where he was twenty years ago; and all this has taken place among the immigrants, the children and grandchildren of the immigrants, who have themselves only just arrived at the place in American society where they have striven to be, whose footprints in the country are not yet a hundred years old.

Let us look at the behaviour of these people in the past six years. In 1968, they were besieged: a war that seemed to have no ending even as it had appeared to have no beginning; casualty lists that mounted; a significant section of the black population resorting to arms and widespread arson, burning the cities; the streets and the market place no longer safe; a much advertised section of the young flouting every convention of society, and perhaps even willing to pull it down. All of this they could, as Nixon and the Republican Party wished that they would, lay at the door of the outgoing administration. There were fears aplenty to play upon. Yet Hubert Humphrey almost won, and he would have won if he had not dallied in the summer. These were not a people who could be moved—by Nixon or by Wallace, who on the day polled only a little more than 10% of the total vote—by a play on their fears, to settle on the administration the responsibility for all the difficulties of the times.

At the mid-term elections of 1970, they were still besieged, and Nixon released his Vice-President to take the attack, in general on the issue of law-and-order, in particular against "the students" whom Nixon at one point described as "bums", the first time that the language of the White House tapes had reached the public. Nationally and even locally, the Democratic Party was still in disarray. Yet when the votes were counted, as one commentator put it at the time, if the people had expressed their support of the line taken by Nixon and Agnew, it was in a whisper that could not be heard.

In 1972, the people were no longer besieged, and they could have been expected to give the credit to the administration. As I have already said, everything was working in Nixon's favour, not least his opponent and some $50,000,000. Yet his victory, even though he carried every state but one, even though his popular majority was large, was not convincing, because the turn-out was so small. If the voters had been a mass, the turn-out, as well as the majority, would have been large. Something held back some of the publics, some even of the individuals, in the mass, to make a positive act of abstention.

WHAT HAPPENS on these occasions? how are the people behaving? For the answer, I will give an example of which my knowledge is detailed and personal. During the spring and summer of 1970, I happened to be living on the margins of the campus of the University of Colorado, at Boulder. It is one of the two or three state universities in the country whose Board of Regents is elected by popular vote. It was the turn of two liberal Democrats to vacate their seats, which were being contested by two right-wing Republicans; if the Republicans won, the liberal majority on the Board would have been overturned. For the first time in the history of Colorado—it was the year of the invasion of Cambodia and the killings at Kent State—the election to the Board of Regents was of acute interest to the voters at large.

The right-wing Republican candidates were sponsored by the brewer, Joe Coors, one of the wealthiest and most powerful men in the state. Their campaign was well financed. Night after night, on the local television channels, they ran

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a series of advertisements, attacking the "permissiveness" of the university authorities as well as the militancy and morals of "the students", using the slogan, "Make your university a fit place to send your daughter." (Were the sons in no danger?) Night after night on the local television news, there appeared reports from the Boulder campus that bore no resemblance to what I had seen with my own eyes during the day; and on the network television news there appeared similarly exaggerated news from other universities in the nation. Every day the attack of Nixon and Agnew was pressed home. What would be the effect of it all?

About a month before the election, it became clear that the Republican "establishment" in the state—it is a Republican state, although with a long tradition of independence—was not going to give its support to the two right-wing Republican candidates; and that meant the realtors and the rotarians and so on in every town. But a doubt remained about the attitude of the blue-collar Democrats, many of whose children were for the first time going to the university, and specifically to Boulder, and from whom a backlash against "the students" had for long been predicted. On the night of the election, I attended a small gathering at the home of the President of the University; and at about 2 a.m. we had our answer. The blue-collars had voted in the election of the Regents, for the first time, but they had voted against the right-wing candidates, who were defeated even more severely than anyone had hoped.

Where had the voters taken their information? They clearly had not taken it from television, either local or national. How had they made up their minds? The answer can only be that they made them up as any of us would do; in part by asking their friends and work-mates: "You have a daughter at C.U.—is she militant or drugged or raped?" Indeed, so many of them in fact had children at the university that they could question the attack of Nixon and Agnew from their own experience. They might not understand their children, have wished that they dressed differently and cut their hair, but they knew that they were not "bums." Moreover, I believe that this is how the majority of voters will usually be found to be behaving, even though the public opinion polls and most political reporting are unable to show us this, and in fact confirm the notion of the mass. These are individuals, members each of various publics, and as such they vote.

THEY CAME INTO THE ARENA last October, when Richard Nixon fired the Special Prosecutor, and his Attorney General resigned in protest. It was in many ways the most impressive demonstration that I have observed in a quarter of a century—and no one was on the streets. There was no mob, not even a crowd; no fits, no slogans, no yells, no guns. Yet it was a demonstration, almost a march; one could hear a people on their feet, not with jackboots or hobnails, but in their Kinney's shoes, as if they had come from the Cinderella Cities of the nation, the shopping centres with their muzak and their pink malls and their fountains, to say that they had not been lulled, and still could find their voice.

They came forward as if each had a visiting card with the same legend, "I, the People." They reminded me, as I watched them arrive, of one of the set-pieces in Henry Adams's political novel, *Democracy*, in which he describes a Jacksonian reception at the White House at which the American People are the guests, all of them! They behave as if they owned the place; and one laughs until one realises that one cannot quite manage the laugh. Perhaps it is true that each American has a visiting card that he can present at the White House when he decides that the occasion is important enough, and that he cannot be turned away. Not every American can become the President; but there is a profound sense in which every American feels that he is a founding father.

There was never any evidence that, having come to the arena, they would retreat from it heedlessly. For ten months, no matter what Nixon said or did, they did not return to him. Even though to have an insupportable President is a trial, they refused to come back. They have been shocked, the people as a whole, at their discovery of the extent to which the political process can be estranged from them. The depth of the shock will be seen only in the future, and certainly the results of the mid-term elections this year are likely to register only the first ripples.

FOR TWO YEARS we have had demonstrated to us how many and varied are the resources of the Constitution of the United States when it is used to the full; how distinct and resilient are its institutions so that one always comes to life when another has over-reached itself or is in decay; how alert and united a free people can be when it recognises the exceptional occasion when

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its voice must be heard. All of these are moral influences, if they are known and understood, trusted and used. If he loved and was obedient to the Constitution, if he respected the institutions of his country and used them, if he cherished the spirit of a people reared to the habits of self-government, one could elect a crook to be President, and leave his morality to look after itself. That is the meaning, after all, of the oath of a President.

The founding fathers were hardly under any illusion about human goodness. (Neither were they the kind of men who are so shallowly described by Gore Vidal in *Burr*). It was precisely because their faith in human goodness was so slight that they wrote their scraps of paper, and what has given life to these over the years has been what Jefferson on his eightieth birthday called "the cherishment of the people." Nothing will more certainly restore morality to the public life of America, and not only of America, than a willingness to trust in the end to the right instincts of a free people, their ability to separate the true from the meretricious; and then to act before them in that light.

Without that, no reform will avail. With it, we might begin to elevate the conversation of politics: by elevating it to elevate our expectations: and by elevating them to elevate the conduct of our public men in the transactions that it is their business to conclude.

The Progress of Mythology

The high ones speak without hesitation on all things.
Though statecraft be their care or the music of the spheres
Yet they deign to interpret the vying of athletes.
The human heart holds no secrets for them. Unlike ours,
Their second thoughts do not drive out their first.
Self-doubt they know is the seed of the fall of temples.
Their opinions are black and white, and the pale cast
Of thought shall never rob them of their colour.
Our imperfections are not in them. The angry pimple
Does not defile the lucid skin. Their noses do not run.
Sometimes a sacred ichor shines briefly on their brows.
When their voices are raised in debate, it seems
That thunder approaches, and we cower in our huts.
Yet it is rare for immortals to destroy one another.
I shall not name them, for they are household names,
And because these great beings wax exceedingly wroth
If their names are taken in vain, and exact large oblations
In recompense. When we fall at their feet
We try not to step on their toes. Hyperaesthesia
Is the first infirmity of noble mind. Fame is a spur.
Sometimes they walk among us, and are not recognised
Or are taken one for another. On feast days they visit
Our places of merriment, attired in simple garb,
As they instruct a youthful virgin in the mysteries
Or converse on high matters with the agents of their power.
That they may taste of the common lot and turn it to honey
They have been known to enter our public vehicles.
Intercourse is unwise, however. Remember Ixion
Who embraced a cloud and burned his fingers.
At times I think we are less than worthy of them,
Yet it is said they created us for their pleasure.

D. J. Enright

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Douglas Dunn

The Difficulty

From the body of my murdered Rosa
Many visitors have come to me here,
Some with winks and small congratulations,
Some with big eyes and accusations.

This would make better sense had I been
An activist, and betrayed activity.
But I have betrayed nothing and no one.
No one has suffered because of me.

Some women are commensurate with the Age.
Their passions flock with the ideas
That struggle with our times,
And are born, not without beauty,

But with a mind that matched to femininity
Creates compassion, and not the nerve
Or fury of a petroleuse or shrew,
The names by which they murdered Rosa.

Time is a man who fights the minds of women—
Hypatia, slaughtered by a bigot-mob
For her philosophy and womanhood;
As Rosa, led into a car by a Lieutenant,

Was clubbed by one called Runge,
And then was shot, her body dumped
In the canal. And when I heard of this,
I heard her say again that one like me,

A poet, need not feel ashamed
At my passivity, with my revulsion for
Temporal politics, and forms of order
Not laid down by the unconscious Gods

Who pulse and labour in mythologies.
But arts are nothing if they let that happen
Without the formal anger it can
Perpetrate. Art lives in futures.

There, in what remains to be seen,
I am dishonoured, one who loved
That small and clumsy woman who walked
Unlike the ordered women men most love;

And one, who, loving, lived in worlds apart,
In moments of a mystery, with words,
A touch of leaves against reluctant senses.
To live one's only life inside a moment!

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Mark Abrams

Changing Values

A Report on Britain Today

IT IS VERY RARE for any model of social change to include any allowance for change in people's values. This is a serious omission, since the use that a society makes of its resources and the level of psychological satisfaction that its members derive from this use is determined by its value system. The main reason for this omission is not that the social analysts and forecasters are unaware of the importance of values, but because so little is known about them (except in an impressionist way), especially over time. If we are to improve our understanding of the direction of, and potential for, social and political change we need reliable and valid measures of values in quantitative terms.

A start has been made on this task—largely by those carrying out surveys of subjective social indicators. These suggest that among today's dominant values are greater social and economic equality, higher living standards, and the immediate gratification of all wants and appetites; the main instrumental value to these ends is seen as more money-for-consumption. In spite of great differences in life experiences these values are common to all contemporary generations of the population. They are also a sharp contrast to what were apparently the values held by the mass of the people before the War when the postponement of gratification and the acceptance of inequality were generally accepted as terminal values; and hard work, self-improvement, and personal effort were dominant instrumental values. The outcome of the change in values is likely to be sharper social and political conflict.

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MUCH OF WHAT WE READ and hear today about social values and changes in them is based on journalists' impressions and on the reactions of public figures to incidents that anger or please them. The resulting generalisations usually lack both precision and adequate supporting evidence. If we are to have any incisive discussion of the topic then we must start by coping with three difficulties: we must find an acceptable definition of what is meant by "values"; we must then agree on valid and reliable means of measuring values; and, finally, we must produce some data derived from the use of these measures.

Fortunately, the first, and, to some extent, the second of these tasks has been coped with, successfully in my opinion, by Professor M. Rokeach of Michigan State University in his recent book *The Nature of Human Values* (1973). At least at the definitional stage I want to draw on his work. He defines a value as

> an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. [And] a *value system* is an enduring organisation of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance.

For example, the enduring belief that *honesty* is preferable to *dishonesty* as a mode of conduct may be a value for some people. Or, again, the enduring belief that *a life of pleasure* is preferable to *a life of austerity* as an end-state of existence may be a value for some others.

Rokeach has elaborated his definition in various ways and some of these are of prime importance. Thus he emphasises that a value is enduring and that, for example, a part-time belief

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in *logic* or a selective preference for *courtesy* do not constitute values. This does not mean, of course, that values do not change. Nor does it mean that under all circumstances all values are of equal weight. There are frequent situations in life in which values come into conflict; we may on occasion have to choose, say, between *equality* and *efficiency*, or between *financial success* and *self-respect*. It is largely this relativity and competitiveness of values that facilitates and engenders changes in people's values.

In common with many other social psychologists Rokeach points out that a person's values are the product of the culture and society in which he is reared and of his personal experience in coping with society. Consequently, changes in social environment and in personal experience will thus be the sources of change in values. A further corollary to this identification of the sources of values is that within any large population (*e.g.*, a Nation-State), there may well be differences in value-systems between different sections of the population, with the differences arising from differences in social environments and personal experience. In Britain, for example, one would expect to find distinctive working-class values and distinctive middle-class values which supplemented or modified for each of these groups a national value-system. Similarly, in the United States it would not be surprising if some values were more important for Blacks than for Whites (for instance, *social equality*) and vice versa (*e.g.* "*national security*" meaning more to Whites than to Blacks).

BEFORE TURNING TO THE PROBLEM of the measurement of values it is, I think, necessary to ask: what functions do values serve? The answer is two-fold. On the one hand, they enable us to resolve conflicts, to choose between alternatives, to make decisions. At the same time they guide our activities and behaviour. People normally act in ways that are congruent with their values. In the absence of any other clues to the nature of people's values we can usually reasonably infer them from their behaviour—and here everyday behaviour in commonplace contexts is at least as important as their behaviour when faced with more dramatic circumstances involving choice.

The significance of behaviour as an indicator of values becomes clear when we turn to the problem of measuring people's values. The method commonly used is to draw a sample of respondents from the relevant population, present a list of values to each respondent, and ask him to rank these values in order of their importance to him. In a national survey (sample size 1,000) of Britain's urban adult population—it was primarily concerned with measuring the levels of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various aspects of their lives (*e.g.* their housing, health, leisure, jobs, etc.)—we also included some questions bearing on values. The interviews were carried out at the end of 1973 and the beginning of 1974, and we can therefore regard the findings as up-to-date measures of British values.

IN ONE SUCH QUESTION the respondent was given a card which contained four value statements and asked to say which seemed the most desirable to him, and which seemed the next most desirable. The four statements were:

1. *Maintain law and order in the nation.*
2. *Give the people more say in important political decisions.*
3. *Achieve a higher standard of living for everyone.*
4. *Protect freedom of speech.*

Of these, statements 1 and 3 have been described at various times as expressing materialist or acquisitive, or bourgeois values. Statements 2 and 4 ("more participation" and "protect freedom of speech") have similarly been described as the values of a post-materialist, post-acquisitive, or post-bourgeois society. If we adopt these labels then it is clear that contemporary Britain is solidly materialist and acquisitive. Over 70% of all first and second choices went to higher living standards and nearly 70% of first and second choices opted for the maintenance of law and order.

A more detailed analysis of the replies brings out the minute dimensions of the post-material section of the population. Over 40% of all respondents gave as their first and second preferences the two materialist goals of *higher living standards* and the *maintenance of law and order*. Only 4% chose the two post-materialist values.

Table 1.
CHOICE FROM FOUR SOCIAL VALUES

	Proportion of all	
	Firsts	*Seconds*
	%	%
Higher living standards	40	32
Maintain law and order	37	30
More participation	13	21
Protect free speech	10	17
	100	100

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43% give 1st and 2nd preference to higher living standards and law and order.
4% give 1st and 2nd preference to more participation and free speech.
53% give other combinations of values.

ON THE BASIS OF THIS QUESTION it seems reasonable to conclude that the old-fashioned middle-class values of *domestic peace* and *rising prosperity* still have a firm grip on a very substantial minority of the British people, and that only a bare majority of the population are prepared to go half way towards the newer and potentially more disruptive values put to them in this question.

IN THE LIGHT OF THIS widely held value of the desirability of higher standards of living, we can here appropriately deal with some of the questions in the interview directly concerned with living standards. The bare facts of possession indicate a high average level of affluence. Substantial majorities of all respondents were in households that are in possession of a refrigerator, a washing machine, and a car; 40% live in dwellings that have some form of central heating; and 30% enjoy colour television sets.

Respondents were asked to use a scale of 0 to 10 to indicate their perceptions of:

1. the *present* standard of living of 15 broad socio-occupational groups—*e.g.* skilled manual workers, clerks, school teachers, coloured immigrants;
2. where on the scale they thought each of these *deserved* to be in terms of standard of living;
3. where respondent put his own *present* standard of living;
4. where respondent thought he *deserved* to be.

The replies on the last two exercises reveal a large and widespread sense of "relative deprivation." For all respondents the mean score for present standards of living was 6·4. They felt, however, that what they were entitled to is, on average, represented by a score of 8·0. In other words, what they have in material terms is felt to be 20% below what they deserve.

The average respondent's present perceived standard of living is below that of seven of the occupation groups; level with that of one of them; and clearly superior to that of six others. These perceived inferiors in material goods are shop assistants, coloured immigrants, unskilled labourers, students, people living on social assistance, and old-age pensioners. However, if the average respondent had the standard of living he feels he is entitled to (8·0), then he would be well ahead of where everyone else now is—with three exceptions: he would still be lagging behind company directors, professional people such as doctors and lawyers, and investors and shareholders.

In circumstances where all the listed groups enjoyed the standard of living they deserved there would be two substantial changes.

1. The average respondent would advance several places in the rank order so that, in fact, he would be significantly outdistanced only by professional people.
2. There would be greater economic equality between the groups. This would be achieved, in part, by holding down or even reducing the standard of living of some groups (company directors, investors, and shareholders) and, in part, by raising sharply the living standards of those now seen to be very poor (old-age pensioners, coloured immigrants, students). All the same, the relatively poor would still be with us—*e.g.* shop assistants, unskilled labourers, clerks. They would lag well behind the standard of living enjoyed by the average respondent.

Table 2.
PERCEIVED PRESENT STANDARDS OF LIVING
MEAN SCORES (0–10)

Company directors & business executives	9·1
Professional people, e.g. doctors & lawyers	8·9
Investors & shareholders	8·7
Civil servants & other high-level office workers	7·4
Skilled workers	7·2
Shopkeepers, small businessmen	6·8
School-teachers	6·6
Policemen, firemen, postmen	6·4
SELF	**6·4**
Clerks, office workers	6·2
Shop assistants	5·4
Coloured immigrants	5·3
Unskilled labourers	5·2
Students	5·0
People living on public assistance	4·6
Old age pensioners	3·8
Gap between SELF & top score	2·7
Gap between SELF & bottom score	2·6

SINCE THE PRE-TESTS AND PILOT WORK had shown that *a comfortable life* was a terminal value of high significance to many people and that the means to this was seen to be in the acquisition of more money, we asked people three relevant questions. (1) how much more money would they

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Table 3.
PERCEIVED DESERVED STANDARDS OF LIVING

Professional people	9·2
Skilled workers	8·4
Company directors	8·4
Policemen, etc.	8·3
School-teachers	8·1
SELF	**8·0**
Small shopkeepers	8·0
Civil servants	7·8
Investors	7·6
Clerks	7·4
Old age pensioners	7·4
Shop assistants	7·3
Unskilled labourers	7·0
Coloured immigrants	6·5
Students	6·3
People on public assistance	5·6
Gap between SELF & top score	1·2
Gap between SELF & bottom score	2·4

need to live without any money worries, and in health and comfort? (2) What did they most need this additional money for? And (3) was there anything which they wanted but had had to forgo because of lack of money?

Less than one-third (31%) of the sample said they did not need any more money to satisfy this particular value. Of the remainder the average extra amount needed was said to be approximately £12. The follow-up questions yielded a large crop of sacrifices which might reasonably be considered to be trivial. In addition to the 31% who said they did not need any more money to lead a comfortable life a further 19% now said that they could not think of anything they have to go without because of a lack of money. Among those ready to name specific deprivations the three most common references were to holidays, consumer durables, and motor cars.

Throughout the interview there were other questions that threw additional light on this particular value. Thus, when asked to say which areas of life were most important in determining overall satisfaction with life, the most frequently mentioned aspects, after *good health*, were *income* and *standard of living*. A solid majority of people feel that the quality of their lives would be better if they had more money; but with one very important proviso—that in getting more money they should *not be outdistanced by others*! When faced with a choice involving such a possibility most people were prepared to forgo part of a possible increase. The relevant question ran:

"Suppose the Government were to put a complete freeze on all prices, but not on incomes, which would you prefer: Your own income to go up by £5 a week, while everyone else's goes up by £6 a week; OR, Everyone's income, including your own, to go up by £4 a week."

85% preferred the £4 a week increase!

What seems to emerge from this particular survey is that the value system of most people in Britain today is solidly grounded in materialism. It also embraces a preference for egalitarianism, but it is an egalitarianism that is both tinged by envy and held in check by deference towards their traditional "betters" and by continuing undervaluation of society's traditional underdogs.

HOW FAR DOES THIS INDICATE any process of change in the British people's values?

Unfortunately, we do not possess an identical survey carried out, say, thirty or forty years ago. We can, however, fall back on two substitute procedures. The first is to look at any differences in values between different age-groups in the present survey. The other, remembering the earlier claim that values can often be inferred from behaviour, is to compare some particularly revealing forms of mass behaviour today with their counterparts of an earlier period. Neither approach is completely valid; the former because differences between today's age-groups will, in part, reflect differences in needs at different stages of the life cycle; and the latter approach can be criticised because some of the significant forms of mass behaviour of today (*e.g.* watching television) were not available to the public at large before the 1950s. However, bearing these cautions in mind, it is still worth while to examine the findings from these two methods of measuring change over time.

In the analysis of the 1973–4 survey respondents were divided into four age-groups: 18–29; 30–39; 40–59; and 60 and over. Their birth dates were respectively 1944 to 1955; 1934 to 1943; 1914 to 1933; and those born before the outbreak of the First World War.

I have chosen for comparison the first and third of these groups; the first (18–29) because it represents adults who grew up entirely in the post-War world and at a time of comparative affluence, when average incomes were in most years advancing steadily. I have taken the third group (40–59) because they grew up in a period marked by long spells of massive unemployment, hunger marches and soup-kitchens, and constantly

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overshadowed by threats of another world war. Given these dramatically contrasting life-experiences one would expect to find equally contrasting value systems. What, in fact, do we find?

WHEN ASKED TO CHOOSE between the materialist and post-materialist goals, the two generations gave almost identical views. 73% of the post-War generation and 72% of the inter-War generation gave either their first or second preferences to the pursuit of *higher standards of living*, and 60% and 67% allotted their second votes to the *maintenance of law and order*. In both groups the post-materialist values of more participation in governmental decision-making and protection of free speech were preferred by only small minorities.

Table 4.
CHOICES FROM FOUR SOCIAL VALUES

	Firsts		*Seconds*	
	18–29 %	40–59 %	18–29 %	40–59 %
Higher living standard	41	41	32	31
Law and order	32	36	28	31
More participation	17	12	25	18
Protect free speech	10	11	15	20
	100	100	100	100
N=	241	316	241	316

The choices when given in paired combinations give much the same picture. There is a slight tilt among the inter-War generation in favour of the materialist pair of values and against the post-materialist pair; but the differences are negligible.

	18–29 %	40–59 %
1st and 2nd choices to standard of living and law and order	38	44
1st and 2nd choices to more participation and free speech	5	1
Other combinations	57	55
	100	100

The replies to the questions about perceived present and deserved standards of living produced the same very high degree of similarity in outlook between the two generations.

Both age groups feel that their present standard of living is well below that of people in many other occupations. Both feel that they are receiving about 20% less than they deserve. Both groups feel that in a just world they would move smartly up the scale in relation to others so that the gap between themselves and those at the top of the scale (*i.e.* those in the professions and company directors) would be very slight. At the same time, both groups say that economic justice would mean no reduction in the present gap between themselves and those with the lowest standards of living. In short, there are today no differences in economic values between the generation brought up in the poverty of the 1930s and those accustomed in their formative years to the relative affluence of the 1950s and 1960s. Both generations feel equally economically deprived; both feel that in a just society everyone would be better off, but that they themselves would be better off than most other people.

Table 5.
PERCEIVED PRESENT STANDARD OF LIVING

	18–29's	40–59's
Company directors	9·1	9·1
Investors	8·7	8·6
Professions	8·6	8·9
Civil servants	7·2	7·4
Skilled workers	6·8	7·3
Shopkeepers	6·8	6·8
SELF	**6·2**	**6·6**
Teachers	6·0	6·7
Policemen, etc.	6·0	6·5
Clerks	5·8	6·2
Shop assistants	5·0	5·4
Unskilled labourers	5·0	5·1
Coloured immigrants	4·9	5·3
Students	4·3	5·0
On public assistance	4·1	4·5
Old age pensioners	3·5	3·9
Gap between SELF & top score	2·9	2·5
Gap between SELF & bottom score	2·7	2·7

Table 6.
PERCEIVED DESERVED STANDARDS OF LIVING

	18–29s	*40–59s*
Professions	9·0	9·3
Company directors	8·5	8·4
Skilled workers	8·2	8·5
Policemen, etc.	8·0	8·3
SELF	**7·9**	**8·1**
Teachers	7·8	8·1
Shopkeepers	7·8	8·0
Investors	7·6	7·6
Civil servants	7·6	7·8
Old age pensioners	7·3	7·4
Clerks	7·2	7·4
Shop assistants	7·1	7·3
Unskilled labourers	6·8	7·0
Coloured immigrants	6·6	6·4
Students	6·2	6·3
On public assistance	5·2	5·6
Gap between SELF & top score	1·1	1·2
Gap between SELF & bottom score	2·7	2·5

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THERE IS, HOWEVER, SOME EVIDENCE that, compared with its elders, the post-War generation attaches an appreciably higher instrumental value to *money*. This is in spite of the fact that their present material backgrounds are almost identical in many respects. In both groups approximately 80% were in possession of a washing machine; 85% a refrigerator; 65% had a car; 45% occupied dwellings with central heating; and one-third had colour television sets. Similarly, when asked how much extra money they would need in order to live without any money worries and in health and comfort only 30% in each age group said they already had "enough money" to meet these goals.

However, differences emerged when in each case the remainder was asked how much more money they needed. The unsatisfied in the post-War generation felt that an extra £15 a week would be needed to provide them with what they considered to be a comfortable life. The dissatisfied among the inter-War generation thought that an extra £11 a week would be enough. In other words, money has a higher instrumental value for the younger generation; and this, in the follow-up questions, translated itself into a wider feeling among them (as compared with their elders) that they would like to spend more on housing, clothes, and cars.

ANOTHER PART OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE dealt with respondents' assessments of the present state of various aspects of our political system and then with what they thought there ought to be. The replies here can be used to throw some light on political values.

Each respondent was asked to use again a 0 to 10 scale to express his views—with 10 meaning "a very great deal", and 0 meaning "not at all." The scale was applied to six indicators of political democracy, and the respondent recorded first how much he thought there *is* in Britain today, and secondly, how much he thought there *ought* to be. The six indicators used were:

1. *Freedom of speech.*
2. *Tolerance by the general public towards people who want to live differently from the way most people do.*
3. *Democracy "in general."*
4. *Ease with which "people like yourself" can understand what's going on in politics and Government.*
5. *The influence voters have on the way the country is governed.*
6. *The extent of social equality.*

In dealing with what there *ought* to be both generations recorded very high and almost identical levels; scores were approximately 9 out of 10 for all aspects. Similarly, both generations indicated high levels of *dissatisfaction with the present* as compared with what they thought there *ought to be.* The ratings were particularly low for the influence voters exercised over government, for the ordinary person's ability to understand political issues, and for the extent of social equality. These low ratings were common to both generations, but were consistently lower among the 18 to 29 age-group. In short, one can conclude that while the ideal of a democratic society is an equally high value for both generations, and, while both generations feel we are a long way short of this political ideal, the sense of frustration, futility, and alienation is a little more widespread among those who have become adults in the past ten years.

AS A FURTHER INDIRECT MEASURE of possible inter-generational changes in values we can turn to the answers given to an abbreviated anomy scale, *i.e.* questions designed to measure how far the respondent distrusts his fellow-men and, in general, is cynical about the workings of society.

Those interviewed were asked to say how far they agreed or disagreed with each of the following five statements:

1. *Most people will go out of their way to help someone else.*
2. *Most councillors and M.P.s are not really interested in the problems of the average man.*
3. *Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.*
4. *Even today, the WAY you make money is more important than HOW MUCH you make.*
5. *You sometimes can't help wondering whether anything is worthwhile.*

Table 7.
QUALITY OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

	Is today		*Ought to be*	
	18–29	*40–59*	*18–29*	*40–59*
How much:				
Freedom of speech	6·9	7·5	8·8	9·0
Tolerance of minorities	5·0	5·9	8·3	8·4
Democracy	6·5	7·0	8·5	8·9
Understanding of politics by ordinary person	5·1	5·3	8·9	9·0
Influence of voters on government	4·5	4·9	8·8	8·9
Social equality	5·1	5·6	8·7	8·7
AVERAGE	5·5	6·0	8·7	8·8

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In a society completely devoid of anomy we would have full agreement with the first statement (*most people are helpful*); complete disagreement with the second statement (*elected officials are not really interested in the ordinary man*); complete disagreement with the third statement (*live for today*); complete agreement with the fourth statement (*the way you make money is more important than how much*); complete disagreement with the fifth statement (*nothing is worthwhile*).

In fact, for the whole sample, and averaging the replies on all five statements, it was found that 45% of people gave anomic answers (*i.e.* are cynical, distrustful); 43% gave non-anomic replies; and the remaining 12% were balanced in the middle. If the same process of amalgamation is carried out for the two generations we are here interested in, then we finish up with the figures shown below.

	18–29 %	40–59 %
Strongly agree with anomic statements	5	5
Agree with anomic statements	40	39
Neither agree nor disagree	13	11
Disagree with anomic statements	38	40
Strongly disagree with anomic statements	4	5
	100	100

IT IS CLEAR FROM THESE FIGURES that there is no significant difference between the two generations on this measure. In both there is a slight preference for a way of life best summed up in the phrase "*nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.*" That is to say, less than half in both age groups are now prepared to endorse the classical Protestant-capitalist-middle-class prescription for the good life—the postponement of gratification of desires and pleasures.

THE CONCLUSION TO BE DRAWN from the data considered so far points very firmly in the direction of rejecting any belief that differences in life-experiences between those who grew up and matured during the wretched inter-War years and those who have been born and brought up in the post-1945 affluent years have produced differences in value systems. If there have been any changes in the social values of the British people then these changes have taken place equally over all age groups.

This means, in the absence of any survey of social values carried out, say, a generation ago, that in order to test the proposition that values have changed, we have to fall back on data provided by studies of people's behaviour in the past so that from this behaviour we can infer their values. There is, fortunately, one such study that can be used in this way and it was concerned with an area of behaviour that has particular relevance in the study of social values—the area of mass communication. Precisely forty years ago, during the first three months of 1934, the London Press Exchange analysed the news, features, and advertising contents of the then nine national daily newspapers; and it simultaneously questioned a national sample of 20,000 of their readers as to what they had read in their newspaper on the day preceding the interview.[1] It is to some of the findings from this survey that I wish to turn to now.

Perhaps the first relevant point to notice is that in those days 34% of all adults in Britain did

[1] The papers then published were: *Daily Express, Daily Herald, Daily Mail, News Chronicle, Daily Mirror, Daily Sketch, Daily Telegraph, The Times,* and *Morning Post.*

Table 8.
ANOMY SCALE RESPONSE

		Strongly agree %	*Agree* %	*Neither* %	*Disagree* %	*Strongly disagree* %
Most people will help	18–29	3	47	14	34	2 = 100%
	40–59	9	53	12	24	2
Elected officials not interested	18–29	6	39	24	31	—
	40–59	8	43	19	29	1
Live for today	18–29	11	52	7	27	3
	40–59	11	56	4	27	2
The way you make money	18–29	6	49	12	30	3
	40–59	5	54	9	30	2
Nothing is worth while	18–29	4	42	10	38	6
	40–59	6	40	10	37	7

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not read a national daily newspaper. Outside the South East of England this minority was much higher, and their preference for a local newspaper was apparently quite unaffected by the fact that most national dailies made special efforts to include "slip" pages in their provincial and early London editions that carried local news and even local advertisements. In other words, it was a society where millions of people were not greatly concerned in their newspaper reading with national, let alone international affairs. Parochial matters were enough for them.

Secondly, two of the nine papers were primarily intended for and read by women. 72% of the readers of the *Mirror* and 73% of the readers of the *Sketch* were women. It is true that most of the other papers sometimes carried a Woman's Page, but a solid majority of their readers were men. Indeed at the two extremes of the social scale—the *Times* and the *Herald*—the owners and editors daily made it ostentatiously clear that in their eyes the world was normally populated entirely by men and that even when by some biological quirk it was not, then what went on in the world of affairs would only be of interest to men. The main concession to women readers was the regular inclusion of a one-page short story concocted from a mixed parentage derived from Ethel M. Dell and Sax Rohmer.

LOOKING AT NEWSPAPER READERSHIPS TODAY we can see two changes compared with 1934. Today the whole country and not merely the South East of Britain finds acceptable what the journalists of Fleet Street provide; and, secondly, at least in the eyes of newspaper publishers, women are equal with men.

The analysis of the main news stories over the first three months of 1934 is a reasonable guide to what editors, thanks to empathy, traditional wisdom, and circulation experience, felt met the interests and desires of their readers. Thus, for the three "class" papers (*Times*, *Telegraph*, and *Morning Post*) 40% of all main stories dealt with foreign and international affairs, and another 20% with Parliamentary and Industrial matters. In the Big Four (*Express*, *Herald*, *Mail*, and *News Chronicle*) the proportions for these categories fell to 20% and 15% respectively. In the two picture papers for women (*Mirror* and *Sketch*) these two categories almost disappeared and between them accounted for no more than 15% of all main news stories. Their place was taken by a hold-all category labelled "personal gossip, accidents, crime, and divorce."

However, in 1934—as in 1974—newspaper readers did not always read what was put under their noses by journalists. The average 1934 reader of the nine papers read only 62% of the stories which editors thought to be most important or most newsworthy. There were, however, considerable divergencies from this average figure. Reading scores well above the average were recorded for the categories Accidents (*e.g.* ENGLISH TOURISTS MAROONED), Weather Disasters (*e.g.* TRAWLER CAPSIZES: FIFTEEN MISSING); Local News (*e.g.* STEYNING DOESN'T WANT LATE DRINKS); and Crime and Divorce (*e.g.* MAN ON SPANKING CHARGE: KISSES & BIRCHING STORY, GIRL'S CONSENT AS DEFENCE).

At the other extreme—and completely ignored by at least half of all readers—were the categories Parliamentary By-elections, International Trade, League of Nations, and Foreign and International Politics. (Almost the least read story during those three months appeared on the front page of the Daily Herald, and ran:

FRENCH PREMIER'S SECRET LONDON MISSION
WANTS CURRENCY PACT
THEN RETURN TO GOLD.)

THE CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN of the people interviewed in 1934 were in the population sampled and interviewed in 1973–74. This time the main national daily newspapers were again monitored. Nowadays, of course, those who decide the composition of news pages have the benefit of constant reader research, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that content reflects reader interest. If this is so, then the 1973–74 monitoring of the national daily press indicates that there has been no significant change in British cultural values over the past forty years. Even the headlines over the forty years are almost interchangeable.

HOW THE DAILY EXPRESS DISCOVERED A MURDERER
RAILWAY UNIONS CALL UP THEIR DELEGATES
BRITISH DOCTORS STUDY ABORTION PROBLEMS
NOTHING TO CONCEAL SAYS HOME SECRETARY

and almost unbelievably:

OIL HELPS MINERS

All these were 1934 newspaper headlines.

The 1934 survey also studied the lead-in appeals of the display advertising that appeared in the national press. Of the 25,000 advertise-

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ments examined it was decided (by a professional academic psychologist) that for:

> 17% the appeal was directed to the *quality* of the material or service advertised, the efficiency of the processes of manufacture or the functioning of the product.
> 11% the appeal was to *health*—the desire to be, or continue to be, physically and mentally fit.
> 8% to *vanity*—the desire to be attractive, good-looking, well-dressed.
> 15% to *curiosity*—or where use is made of the universal interest in human beings as such or in people facing a possible contingency.
> 6% appealed to *humour*—the sense of the burlesque, the ludicrous, the incongruous.
> 2% appealed to *sex interest*.

The balance of advertisements was spread over a wide range of appeals; but those I have listed above give a clear enough guide to what manufacturers and their advertising agents thought were most in accord with the value system of the British public. A desire for quality was thought to be top, and an interest in sex almost bottom.

To appreciate fully this value system of 1934 it is worth recalling some of the advertisements which scored the highest attention values—*i.e.* the extent to which they were looked at and read by newspaper readers.

The outstanding "quality" advertisements showed a smiling country girl delivering a basket of eggs and wheat to a food factory, photos of factories, and drawings of laboratories.

The typical health appeal centred on a white-coated bespectacled figure of authority offering his own experience as a testimonial.

The appeal to vanity often took the form of a female member of the aristocracy (or some other member of the Establishment) lightly touching her cheek and attributing its sleekness to the regular use of a particular cold cream or toilet soap.

Almost the top scorer in attention value was the appeal to curiosity. This was usually found in the strip cartoon advertisement with its short-story picture and balloon treatment of what were thought to be problems of concern and anxiety to the British people—how to work harder; how to please one's parents; how to impress one's employer favourably; how to make a good impression at an interview.

But the real top-scorer in attention value was the appeal to humour—the startled zoo-keeper watching a seal balancing a bottle of beer on its nose. Or the cheerful labourer who having downed his glass of beer was back at work carrying an immense steel girder on his head.

If the advertisers were right, then those were the days of deference to authority, cheerful hard work, an innocent child-like sense of humour, and a belief in the wisdom of the upper classes.

JUDGING BY THE ADVERTISEMENTS in the 1973–74 daily newspapers the average person's values have changed considerably. Using the 1934 categories at least 10% (and not 2%) appealed to sex-interest. And whereas the 1934 sex-interest advertisement promised at most a box of chocolates, the modern version is likely to convey the assurance that intercourse will follow almost immediately after consumption.

Health ads are almost as frequent as they were forty years ago—but now they deal with the health of dogs and cats rather than with the health of human beings.

The appeal to quality has come to be increasingly restricted to one aspect of quality—that is to say, power (*e.g.* YOU'LL ENJOY VIVID PERFORMANCE FROM A POWERFUL SIX CYLINDER ENGINE).

But the biggest difference lies in the fact that to classify modern advertisements adequately two *new* categories have to be added to the 1934 list—the appeal to *fashion*, and the appeal to *immediate gratification* for all one's appetites.

The appeal to buy for the sake of fashion might, on the face of it, be construed as the emergence of a new value—a preference for individuality and for self-expression. In fact, of course, given the nature of mass production industry it is nothing of the sort. A new fashion can only be marketed successfully if a very substantial number of consumers decide that they too will adopt the new fashion. It constitutes, in fact, a preference for frequent change—but only on condition that support is provided by a lot of people ready to make the same change.

The appeal that offers immediate gratification is genuinely new and very substantial. The advertising genius who coined for ACCESS credit cards the slogan "*Take The Waiting Out Of Wanting*" has crystallised a very important feature of contemporary Britain's value system. It summarises the essential rejection of the Protestant ethic and the apotheosis of Andy Capp as today's folk hero. For those who have forgotten—or missed—Andy Capp let me remind you of some of his famous characteristics. Whether he has money or not, he invariably finds some way to drink beer when he is thirsty and to eat when he is hungry. Irrespective of the hour of the day, he sleeps when he is tired. His economy is based on borrowing.

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Whenever he plays—football, or billiards, or cards—he insists on winning. And to make sure that he is not disturbed by any sight of reality he always wears a cap drawn well down over his eyes. His appeal has been tremendous. In the 1960s not far short of ten million people looked for his appearance every day in the *Daily Mirror*, and cheap paperback editions of Andy Capp cartoons sold in their hundreds of thousands.

AND NOW, FINALLY AND BRIEFLY, a few words about the implications of what I have said in this article.

I believe that there has been a change in the values of the British people. A large proportion of us now place much greater emphasis on the terminal value of a comfortable life, and on the instrumental value of more money. Indeed "more money" has for many become almost a terminal value; the act of spending by itself, and almost irrespective of what is bought, provides satisfaction and a reduction of tension. At the same time there is considerable emphasis on greater *social equality*; but this value is liable to conflict with the value of more money.

There is no evidence that these values are limited to any one particular generation. Irrespective of early experiences they are shared today by all age groups. If these values lead to social conflict it will not be because of any "generation gap" between the newer values of "post-materialist" youth and materialist middle-age. It will be because of the peculiar character of income in every modern affluent society. In the words of Professor Easterlin, "the utility a person obtains from his consumption expenditure is a function, not of the absolute level of his expenditure, but of the ratio of his current expenditure to that of other people. . . ."

I believe this outlook is here to stay and that we shall therefore, if we are to avoid extreme social conflict, have to move towards much greater economic equality than we now have. Only after that has been done will it be possible to restore some of the more civilised values of the inherited Protestant ethic and perhaps to create greater equality in the pursuit and enjoyment of non-economic ends.

Next

Something is going on around me.
The cats have been learning to use tools.
They lie on the floor, smug.

In the morning, when I wake up,
The furniture has beaded with drops
Of lemon oil, drying.
The radio has turned itself on,
And sings to itself,
And the television
Selects its own programmes
In the most perfect colour.

There is no dust anywhere.
Even the light is free of it.
While I contemplate this,
Amazed,
I tend to forget
The zig-zag crack in the floor
Moving
Toward the zig-zag crack in the wall.

Susan Schaeffer

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Column

IN THE COURSE of the summer, Mr Robin Day wrote a letter to *The Times* protesting against Mr Bernard Levin's description of certain Parliamentary proceedings as "more fitting for a jamboree of Hell's Angels than the mother of Parliaments", and the members of the House as "a mob of roaring, boring, squalling, perfectly appalling hooligans." Mr Day, who was present himself, questioned the accuracy of Mr Levin's description and defended Parliament against such extravagant and rhetorical censure. He ended his letter by saying that "without a Parliament like ours" both Mr Levin and himself "would be rotting inside some Gulag Archipelago."

I do not know whether Mr Levin or Mr Day was right in his description of those proceedings in Parliament. What struck me most about the letter is that Mr Day, who knows better than most how to use language which is immediately intelligible to an audience of millions, should take it for granted that everyone would know what he meant by the phrase "some Gulag Archipelago." It seems to me a strong testimony to the impact of Solzhenitsyn's book[1] that its title should have so quickly passed into ordinary English usage. Six months ago very few people would have understood its obscure implications; today, apparently, everyone does, and that is in itself a matter of considerable significance.

No doubt Solzhenitsyn himself may feel gratified that his book should have received such wide and immediate recognition. Yet at the same time I wonder whether he may not also have felt inclined to shrug his shoulders in despair, thinking perhaps that (to judge by Mr Day's comment) his book, despite the acclamation with which it had been received, may have failed after all to make its real point. For Mr Day's remark implies that for such as he and Mr Levin, and no doubt for thousands of others, there is really no alternative to being governed by "a Parliament like ours" and the conditions which obtain in the Gulag Archipelago.

NOW IN THE FIRST PLACE, such an implication is quite obviously not true to fact. There are hundreds of states whose forms of government in no way resemble "a Parliament like ours." Indeed there are very few which have anything like it. Some of such states flourish and some do not. In some, Mr Day and Mr Levin might no doubt find themselves silenced or even suffer the condign punishment of being locked up together in the same prison cell; in others, however, they might find themselves as popular and successful as they are here at home. But however uncivilised and barbaric some of these states may be, I think it would be true to say that in none do conditions in any way approximate to those which Solzhenitsyn describes in *The Gulag Archipelago*; and indeed I very much doubt whether Solzhenitsyn himself believes that the only cure for them lies in substituting for the Supreme Soviet "a Parliament like ours."

The Gulag Archipelago is in many respects a unique book but in particular because it describes a unique situation. In this sense, it is difficult to think of any book which in any way resembles it, unless one resorts to the realm of fiction, fantasy, science fiction, or fairy tale. But the distinguishing feature of *The Gulag Archipelago* is precisely that it is fact and not fiction, and in that strange country which Solzhenitsyn describes the facts exceed in horror anything which imagination has been able to achieve. "The horror! Oh, the horror!" cries Mr Kurtz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and Conrad brings the sense of it very close to us, but we never finally know what the horror really was. In *The Gulag Archipelago* we know all the horrors in every detail, and the realism, the irony, the understatement with which Solzhenitsyn describes them only increase the impact they make upon our minds.

NO DOUBT THERE ARE THOSE who, for various reasons and motives, would deny that the Soviet Union is unique in the degree to which it has degraded and brutalised its citizens. They would, and do, quote the examples of the "Fascist" states of varying complexions; the Greece of the Colonels; post-Allende Chile; the Union of South Africa; and in particular, of course, the Germany of Adolf Hitler, which for many years was accepted as the ultimate in horror which a political system could achieve. There are innumerable reasons why such comparisons in no way correspond to the facts. But perhaps the simplest one is that of no other state in this century can we say that for over 50 years now it has deliberately and successfully applied an organised system of terror as a recognised instrument of government, in such a way as to make it the basis of a stable state. Hitler's Germany was indeed bad enough; and but for the existence of the Soviet Union it would be difficult to imagine

[1] *The Gulag Archipelago 1918–1956*. By ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN. Translated by THOMAS P. WHITNEY. Collins & Harvill Press, £3; Fontana, 80p; Harper & Row, $12.50, paper $1.95.

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anything worse. Yet even from Hitler's Germany there were means of escape, either externally or internally. From *The Gulag Archipelago* there are none, except for the rare exceptions who, like Solzhenitsyn himself, by their own courage and the respect they have achieved outside the Soviet Union, have succeeded in defying the system. Moreover, Hitler's Germany was an inherently unstable state; the Soviet Union is evidently here to last.

★

BUT AFTER ALL, was *The Gulag Archipelago* required in order to teach us this? Does it tell us anything more that we had not already learned from Nikolaevsky and Dallin, from Robert Conquest's *The Great Terror*, from Koestler, or Alexander Weissberg or Mme Mandelstam, or from a host of books which have objectively analysed and exposed the system of terror which lies at the foundation of the Soviet state?

It is true that even such an accumulation of knowledge, research and experience has still not convinced everyone that the Soviet Union long ago lost all pretentions to civilisation. There are still large numbers of people throughout the world who either blandly ignore such evidence, or claim that, at the worst, it only reflects distortions and aberrations in Soviet policy which give no real clue to the fundamentally progressive nature of the system. But with the years it has become harder and harder to maintain such attitudes with any show of plausibility, and as a result the Soviet Union has gradually lost that immense intellectual and spiritual prestige it once enjoyed among both the intellectuals and the working class of the Western world. "I have seen the future, and it works!" cried Lincoln Steffens; but the future he saw is now the past, and if it worked it was in ways which, had he ever experienced them, would have shattered all his illusions.

What need was there, then, for this immense work of Solzhenitsyn's (of which *The Gulag Archipelago* comprises only two of seven parts), in particular because it is never likely to reach, even in *samizdat* form, the hands of those whom Solzhenitsyn himself would most wish to influence, that is, the Russian people themselves? Nor, on the other hand, is it likely to change the minds of those who, for *raisons d'état*, are convinced that the only rational policy to be adopted towards the Soviet Union is one of progressive détente and collaboration. Dr Kissinger knows all about what Solzhenitsyn has to say, but believes it has no relevance to power politics, which is the only kind of politics he respects. And he knows exactly the kind of men who have been and are responsible for maintaining and perpetuating the state of affairs which Solzhenitsyn describes. Perhaps that is why he is so good at dealing with them.

ONE REASON AT LEAST why the publication of *The Gulag Archipelago* constitutes a major event in the relationship between the Soviet Union and the Western world is that it totally destroys any illusion that the Terror was a temporary aberration of Stalin's, the invention of a half-mad Asiatic despot, crazed with suspicion and a lust for power, and as such bears no relation to the permanent aims and aspirations of the Soviet state. On the contrary, says Solzhenitsyn, with a force and persuasiveness which no one else has as yet equalled, terror, of which the vast network of camps and prisons which constitute the Gulag Archipelago is the embodiment, was from the start an integral and necessary element in the system of government inaugurated by the Bolshevik Revolution.

It was necessary, he says, because at the birth of the Revolution the Bolshevik leaders recognised, and were sharply aware, that they and their followers constituted a tiny minority of the Russian people, and that they could maintain themselves in power only by taking the most ruthless measures against the innumerable centres of opposition which existed throughout the vast length and breadth of Russia. From this point of view, every Russian (except for themselves and their minuscule following which constituted the Bolshevik party) was an enemy, actual or potential; and for this purpose it was necessary to create a legal, judicial, and penal system under which any Russian (that is to say, every Russian who did not totally accept the Bolshevik programme) became guilty of a legal offence liable to the most severe punishment, including death, or worse.

On this subject, all the Bolshevik leaders, including even, and in some cases particularly, those who were to become victims of the system they created, were fully agreed. But none of them drew the logical and most extreme conclusions from it more enthusiastically and more ferociously than Lenin. In 1917 he had demanded "the merciless suppression of attempts at anarchy by drunkards, hooligans, counter-revolutionaries and other persons"; but by 1918 he had progressed to proclaiming the necessity of "purging the Russian land of all kinds of harmful insects", and urged that every local community should find its own means of exterminating the vermin by which they were all infected. His own suggestions included arrest, setting them to clean latrines, punishment cells, punishment with hard labour,

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shooting; but he urged every community to compete in devising its own measures, however extreme, for disinfecting themselves of the germs that were endemic in their midst.

Lenin conceived of terror as a form of political hygiene by which Russia freed itself from the parasites which fed upon the body politic. It was a point of view which reduced the human being to a form of rodent. Among the most dangerous, and ubiquitous, of parasites were intellectuals. "In what block of a big city, in what factory, in what village . . . are there not saboteurs . . . who call themselves intellectuals?" In 1918 he wrote to Gorky that "the intellectuals were not in fact [the nation's] brains, but shit"; and indeed, to him, terror was not only a form of hygiene but a kind of excretory function.

IN DESCRIBING THE SYSTEM which Lenin inaugurated, Solzhenitsyn ironically parodies his style by comparing the camps and prisons of the archipelago with a gigantic sewage disposal system by which the Soviet Union eliminates the waste matter which it excretes from its body. The flow through the system varies periodically according to the degree of infection from which Russia is believed to be suffering; gradually rising under Lenin, growing to a flood under Stalin, declining under Khrushchev, showing a tendency to rise again under Brezhnev. But whatever the rate of disposal, the system is always there, essentially the same, a magnificent feat of "human engineering", adequate to any of the tasks imposed upon it, even by Stalin, and as necessary to the healthy functioning of the state as its sewers and cleansing stations to a great city.

★

BUT JUST AS ROME was not built in a day, so the system of terror required years and decades before it matured into its present stage of effortless efficiency. Solzhenitsyn devotes a large part of *The Gulag Archipelago* to the growth and development of the Soviet legal and penal system, which ensures that the Soviet Union shall never run short of waste matter, in the shape of the inhabitants of the Archipelago. Their numbers have never been definitively calculated but by this time may be reasonably compared with those millions of human sacrifices which were periodically demanded by the worship of the Sun God in the Mexico of the Aztecs. The Bolsheviks were required, among other tasks, to create an entirely new system of law before terror could be systematically and methodically applied. Under Lenin, despite the wealth of brilliant and original ideas which he contributed to the task, it was in its infancy, finding its feet, hesitant and erratic, and stumbling over unexpected obstacles. Under Stalin it grew into manhood; and in the first flush of its new strength achieved spectacular successes which provided a model for his successors, but also indulged in extravagances which it was later possible to dispense with. Today it has acquired something of the sobriety and regularity of middle age, though the eccentricities of a few intellectuals (those shits again!) are providing it with a few unexpected difficulties. But alas! so far no one can detect any signs of decay and senility. For its purposes, the system remains as efficient as ever.

ONE CANNOT HELP ADMIRING the ingenuity and diligence which Solzhenitsyn has traced the course of its development, even though he has laboured under the narrow limitations imposed in the Soviet Union on research into so sensitive a subject. For much of his evidence he has relied on published sources, particularly the proceedings of the long series of State Trials which have played an essential part in disguising terror under the mask of law, and still have the same role, even though in a resticted form. Somehow the classical scenario of arrest, interrogation and torture, trial, public confession, self-abasement and conviction does not work quite so well as before, though it has played well in some of the satellite capitals.

But he has supplemented such sources with the first-hand evidence available to him as a result of his own travels in the Gulag Archipelago, and in particular with what he learned as a result of his own conversations and discussions with the thousands of prisoners he encountered as he himself was passed through the multifarious channels of the great sewage disposal system. Such conversations give a particular flavour to his book; they read like travellers' tales told by some intrepid explorer who has returned from a strange, almost legendary land and despite his sufferings and privations has lived to tell the story. His book consists, among other things, of innumerable short biographies of Russians who, but for Solzhenitsyn, would have been condemned to die forgotten without any living witness to their sufferings in the silence and darkness, the icy cold and burning heat, of the Archipelago, where the harshness of the physical conditions was only exceeded by the cruelty and ferocity of those responsible for its administration.

This series of short lives, interspersed throughout the text, gives one a sense of knowing that terrible and far-off country with an intimacy and immediacy which were never available to us before. We know not only its climate and geography, its rivers and ports and communications

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system and the way it is governed and the principles on which it is based; we also know its people, and how they live, and think, and work, and, most of all perhaps, die. For a moment, at the end of reading this long book, we seem to sit back and wake up, blinking our eyes, and hasten to reassure ourselves of the reality of our familiar surroundings, because for a time we have been almost physically transported to another world which Solzhenitsyn has made more real and vivid to us than our own.

THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO is neither an easy nor a pleasant book to read. How could it be, given what it has to say? It is perhaps a mark of Solzhenitsyn's own particular genius that what one feels most at the end of reading it is not horror or despair or indignation, however much all these feelings are involved, but something else, to which it is difficult to give a name. One has had precisely the same mysterious feeling at the end of reading *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, or *Cancer Ward*, or *The First Circle*. Its name is certainly not hope, because nowhere does Solzhenitsyn suggest that one day the Archipelago will vanish, like a nightmare. It is rather an assurance that even under the conditions of the Archipelago the human spirit can and does survive. And we in the West, who are in danger of thinking that we have invented an archipelago of our own, are very much in need of such an assurance.

Solzhenitsyn, however, does not only offer assurance. He comes very near to saying that *only* in the Archipelago, where men are stripped of everything in which they have found something to comfort, sustain or distract them, can the human spirit find that peace and freedom in which it is naturally born to live. This is a message which will not find easy acceptance in the West, any more than in the Soviet Union and its satellites. For it is essentially a religious message; and fundamentally *The Gulag Archipelago* is not a political book but a religious one. Perhaps that is why, as one reads in it, one is sometimes reminded, however absurdly, because of the abyss which divides the two worlds from which they come, of some lines of the metaphysical poet, Thomas Traherne:

> *News from a foreign country came*
> *As if my treasure and my wealth lay there.*

R

Spokesman to Bailiff, 1349: Plague

(*". . .after which the bourgeoisie."*)

We leave you payment.
In a cup of vinegar
Beside the well, the
Coins that you require.

Let no one approach us.
Here we make an end
Of ceremony, custom. In
Our wreckage all of

Europe's racked, your
Kindness unrequited in
Its kind. And yet our death's
A birth of avarice and

Powers oblique, unfathomed.
Leave us bread & ointments.
Free from obligations, we
Leave the world to its wealth.

John Matthias

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Critical Theory

On "the Frankfurt School"—By ANTHONY QUINTON

IT IS A COMMONPLACE that the Marxist faith shows a marked similarity of structure to the Christian religion. The dialectic is God, Marx is his, or its prophet, the revolution is the Last Judgment, and the classless society is the Promised Land. If the history of the two creeds is compared some further suggestive parallels emerge. Both began as the beliefs of small and unimportant-looking millenarian groups: the Disciples and the International Working Men's Association. The evident failure of the millennium to arrive led to accommodations with reality: the Roman Catholic Church and Soviet Communism. The corruption of these accommodating strategies, their exploitations and inquisitions, inspired passionate reforming impulses of a backward-looking kind: the Protestant Reformation and the idealist and humanist revisions of Marxism which have developed since 1917.

It is reasonable to date the Marxist reformation from the publication in 1923 of *History and Class-Consciousness* by Lukács, who may be regarded as the Wycliffe of the movement since, despite all his heresies, he died in the faith. From him has stemmed a body of less compromising Lollards, most notably the critical theorists of the Frankfurt school. Their Institution for Social Research was founded at Frankfurt in the year in which Lukács' book was published. In the Hitler years they moved physically, if not altogether spiritually, to the United States. At the end of the 1950s the leading figures returned, in something like glory, to Frankfurt. Since then a second generation of critical theorists has emerged under Habermas and has come to occupy a commanding place in the social thought of the *Bundesrepublik*. More recently still, as a thoughtful reaction to the anarchic extravagances of the student rebellion of the late 1960s, critical theory has received both attention and adherence in the United States, where Marcuse, one of its leading original exponents, had been the half-gratified, half-reluctant object of a cult in the period of turmoil.

On the whole it has been hard for British readers to gain a balanced and comprehensive view of this most intellectually serious and articulate version of neo-Marxism. For the most part the writings of its exponents have been locked up in comparatively inaccessible publications in German. Those that have been translated, notably works by Adorno and Habermas, have not, one might say, been translated far enough. Many of their works are now available in (mostly) English words, but the structure of their thinking remains too cryptically Teutonic and Hegelian to secure entry into the British mind. To get into a position where it is reasonable to think one has really grasped what they are trying to say it has been necessary to wait for people brought up to speak and think in English to undertake the stern labour of interpretation.

During the last years of his life George Lichtheim was the most conspicuous supporter of the Critical Theorists in this country. In numerous articles, particularly reviews in the *Times Literary Supplement* of German republications of the classics of critical theory, now collected in his *From Marx to Hegel*,[1] he heaped scorn on the inveterate empiricism and positivism of English-speaking social theory and praise on its German critics. But it was difficult to tell from his knowing but enigmatic allusions just what it was that was being argued by the critical theorists and what was to be put in place of the despised social theory of positivism. More light, at least on the sources of the doctrine, was available from Lichtheim's little book on Lukács and from Alasdair MacIntyre's somewhat one-dimensionally critical book in the same series on Marcuse. But for more systematic discussion of critical theory we have had to wait until the last few months.

TWO FAIRLY CURSORY survey volumes are now available which serve admirably to locate the Frankfurt school in the general development of

[1] *From Marx to Hegel*. By GEORGE LICHTHEIM. Orbach & Chambers, £2.95.

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Marxian thought since Marx. The first of these, Peter Hamilton's *Knowledge and Social Structure*,[2] which is sympathetic without being rigidly partisan, is really an account of the sociology of knowledge, of the idea that sociological explanations can be provided for the social doctrines people hold, from its beginnings with Vico and Montesquieu through to the phenomenological sociology of Alfred Schutz. But it contains in its first half, which deals with Hegel, Marx, Lukács, the Frankfurt school and Lucien Goldmann, a lucid, if somewhat inelegantly written account of what may be called the intellectual resistance to the mechanisation of Marxism in theory and practice. On the level of theory this mechanisation is ordinarily attributed to Engels and consists of the view that consciousness, thought, or theorisation is merely epiphenomenal, a dependent by-product of autonomous processes at work in the material base of society. On this view proletarian class-consciousness is the direct result of the exploitation of workers by a capitalism that brings them explosively together in great masses in its factories. It seems to imply that Marxist theorising itself plays no crucial part in the historical process it describes. Marx himself skirted round this issue by saying that knowledge of Marxist theory could help men to ease the birth-pangs of the new classless order that was inevitably coming anyway.

On the level of practice, mechanisation took the form of the Leninist doctrine which made the Party the sole and unquestionable repository of true knowledge and required absolute obedience to its decisions. Lenin allowed in principle for free critical discussion before the moment of decision. But, as it worked out, the leader of the Party became a transcendent oracle, so that the main intellectual task of his subordinates became that of working out in advance what he was going to decide so as to keep out of trouble.

LUKACS' ESSENTIAL CLAIM was that the proletariat would not automatically develop the sort of class-consciousness that would inspire them to the kind of revolution Marx had in mind. Such a consciousness had to be "imputed" to them, in effect by enlightened Marxist intellectuals, presumably organised in the vanguard party. As the error underlying mechanisation, Lukács identified *reification*, an idea derived by generalisation from the concept of fetishism in Marx's critique of classic political economy. Classical economics, according to Marx, was a form of ideological false consciousness. It erroneously attributed the status of substantial things to capital and to abstract labour conceived as a commodity, when these in fact were human activities. Just the same error, but on a larger scale, is present in mechanistic Marxism, which reifies or fetishises the material base of society. In consequence, theory is mistakenly sundered from practice; it is represented as a dependent outcome of practice and not, as it should be, as dialetically interacting with it.

Lukács, who chose to remain in the Soviet orbit after the collapse of Bela Kun's communist republic, was constrained to recant his heresies. But they were kept alive by Max Horkheimer and the critical theorists of the Frankfurt school, whose freedom of thought and expression remained unimpeded, first in the Weimar Republic and then, after Hitler, in the United States. Where Lukács had been inspired by the incompatibility of the authoritarian party (creator of the NEP and pursuer of crudely, unculturedly economic goals) with the freedom of the intellect, the chief impetus to the Frankfurt school was the more general failure of Marx's prediction to be realised. The Leninist party could be seen as an outcome of the fact that there was hardly enough of a proletariat in Russia to make a revolution. Outside Russia, in societies where there really were industrial proletarian masses, the proletariat had evidently failed to develop a revolutionary class-consciousness. A new bearer of revolutionary consciousness had to be found. It turned out to be that old hero of the tradition of German idealism: Reason—a somewhat reified or fetishised name for Marxist intellectuals who took seriously the Hegelian elements in Marx.

THE STORY THAT Peter Hamilton tells from the standpoint of the sociology of knowledge is also to be found in Neil McInnes's *The Western Marxists*,[3] an account of the "remystification of Marx", which covers Sorel, Gramsci, Korsch and the more anarchic and romantic elements of the New Left as well as Lukács and the Frankfurt school. Where Hamilton is clearly sympathetic to the movement of thought he discusses, McInnes is not, but he takes it seriously enough to have studied it thoroughly. He is an Australian and, I should judge from certain turns of phrase and thought, a pupil of John Anderson, the remarkable and influential Sydney philosopher, who in the inter-War years incorporated Marx and Freud into more traditional philosophy (the latter being represented in his case by the naturalistic metaphysician Samuel Alexander, rather than Hegel, whom the critical theorists recruited for the same task).

These features of his background give him three

[2] *Knowledge and Social Structure*. By PETER HAMILTON. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.20, paper £1.60.

[3] *The Western Marxists*. By NEIL MCINNES. Alcove Press, £2.95; Library Press, $8.95.

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advantages. First, like all Andersonians, he writes with force, lucidity and economy. Secondly, unlike the analytic philosophers of Britain and America, he is quite familiar with, and finds nothing odd in, the idea that there is such a thing as social philosophy and that the views of Marx and Freud should be part of it. Thirdly, and more elusively, there is none of that slight bourgeois embarrassment that affects the dealings of Anglo-American philosophers, such as they are, with Marxism, an anxiety occasioned by the brutal character and content of Marxian polemics and that expresses itself either in the form of abstract scholarly civility, as of an old-fashioned social worker in a slum district, or (at the opposite extreme) in the form of rhetorical bluster which shifts attention from the theoretical matters at issue to the enormities of Stalin and the KGB. It is as if, being Australian, he is not made nervous by references to things like social class and hunger.

Covering a wider field of Marxist thinking than Hamilton, he considers the critical theorists' application of Freud, in which they see capitalism as a spiritual repressor in addition to being a material oppressor. He interprets Lukács' view that art and other products of high culture can transcend history and society as revealing that his fundamental hostility is not so much to capitalism as to industry itself. He maintains his clarity and poise as he follows the course of ever more hyperbolical Hegelianisation in Lukács and the Frankfurt school, through which the ideal proletariat becomes the "subject-object" of history, a new interpretation of Hegel's Absolute Spirit, and is taken to be accessible only to dialectical metaphysics, with the consequence that science and logic are rejected as mere reifications or fetishes.

In general, McInnes sees the neo-Marxists as swallowing Weber's social identification of science and logic with economic rationality. Agreeing that economic rationality, particularly as confined for its ends to the growth of production, is not the only kind of rationality, he sensibly observes that that does not imply that it is not rational at all. Narrowly economic ends must take their place in competition with other ends and science and logic are relevant to the pursuit of any of them; they are not essentially tied to the narrowly economic.

SO MUCH FOR the general picture. We may now turn to more specific consideration of the critical theory of the Frankfurt school. There could be no better introduction to the history of the movement than Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination*[4] which covers the period from its foundation in 1923 to its reinstallation in Frankfurt around 1950. It is hard to see how this could have been better done. Jay has not merely read the works of the critical theorists and studied the public surface of the movement's life. On the one hand, he shows a masterly apprehension of their sources and contemporaries in central European social thought; on the other, he has gone deeply enough into the minor empirical detail of his subject of study to relieve and illuminate his account with a well-deployed accumulation of more personal and evanescent items, matters of personal tension and friction, the private attitudes of the members of the group to each other, their work and the current state of the world. The result is a brilliantly rounded presentation. It is in no way to qualify my praise of Jay's gifts and the use he has made of them to say that he perhaps chose an ideal moment to carry out his project. At the time he set about it the main figures were alive and available for interviews, and correspondence and their private papers were not lost or dispersed, while they were old enough not to mind use being made of them. This is a magnificently authoritative piece of work, which, and this is not a left-handed compliment, will not need to be done again.

Jay is plainly sympathetic to the doctrines of the Frankfurt school. In the introduction he asks how intellectuals critical of society can avoid having their protest embraced and absorbed by the culture they are protesting against, illustrating the point by the taming of the avant-garde, existentialism, and the counter-culture. The implication is that the theoretical seriousness of Critical Theory has preserved it from a comparable trivialisation. But in the main body of the book he is a self-effacingly neutral recorder, a position somewhat at odds with that of the movement he admires and has so devotedly studied.

THE STORY BEGINS with the endowment by Felix Weil, a rich young businessman with interests in South America, or, more precisely, by his father, of an Institute of Social Research, attached to the University of Frankfurt. From the beginning both administrative and intellectual leadership were centred in Max Horkheimer, although he did not become the official director until 1930, after two more senior and established people had held the post. Of the major figures associated with the group Horkheimer is probably the least well known. He is by far the least copious writer among them. His one book in English, *Eclipse of Reason*, came out in 1944 and made little impact. This was largely due to the Aesopian caution of the Frankfurt school in America. In order not to provoke their American sponsors, such as Columbia University and the

[4] *The Dialectical Imagination*. By MARTIN JAY. Little, Brown, $12.50; Heinemann Educational, £3.50.

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American Jewish Committee, their commitment to Marxism, idiosyncratic and wholly free of party taint though it was, was concealed by the wrapping of Marxian thoughts in liberal-democratic verbiage. Thus an Oxford philosopher of broadly Hegelian sympathies could review *Eclipse of Reason* as if it were an unusually brief series of Gifford lectures by a professor in Scotland.

Horkheimer's main writings were articles in the Institute's journal: the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, since collected in two German volumes as *Kritische Theorie*. When, as announced, they come out in English, Horkheimer's central position should be easier to understand. The chief original members of the group, besides him, were Friedrich Pollock, an economist who attributed the capacity of capitalism to survive the depression to its transformation into a new form of state capitalism; and Theodor Weisengrund-Adorno, student of Husserl, Kierkegaard, musicology, consultant to Thomas Mann on the composition of Mann's *Dr Faustus*, the most pyrotechnically highbrow and, it must be said, unintelligible of the group.

IN DUE COURSE other recruits joined. Herbert Marcuse, whose *Reason and Revolution* of 1941 was the first, and for a long time the only, book by a member of the group to be widely noticed in the English-speaking world, and who developed the theme of capitalist civilisation as a repressor of men, an obstruction to possible happiness; Leo Löwenthal, student of mass culture and the sociology of literature; Franz Borkenau, who was led by his experiences in Spain into becoming the most learned and passionate exposer of organised international communism; Franz Neumann, whose *Behemoth* was the first theoretically serious major interpretation of the social system of Nazism; Erich Fromm, the Freudian revisionist; Walter Benjamin, the literary theorist; and finally, the only gentile among the school's leading members, Karl Wittfogel, the theorist of Oriental Despotism. All of these but Marcuse and Löwenthal were fairly loosely committed to Horkheimer's principles and in various ways drifted away from association with the school.

DURING THE PERIOD COVERED by Jay's study the members of the Institute were active over an impressively wide range of fields. While Horkheimer concentrated on fundamental issues of theory and method, Adorno worked on music and mass culture; Marcuse on the psychological utopian dimension of neo-Marxian hopes and on the deformations of Marxism in the theory and practice of the Soviet Union; Löwenthal on Dostoevsky, Ibsen and Knut Hamsun; Borkenau on the transition from feudalism to capitalism; Neumann on Nazism as the last stage of capital-

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ism; Fromm on the repressive patriarchal attitude of Freud; Wittfogel on the "hydraulic societies" of Asia; Pollock on the forms of late capitalism.

In 1934 the Institute re-established itself in New York, under the protective wing of Columbia University, after a short stay in Geneva, but the bulk of its output, and, in particular, the *Zeitschrift,* continued to be published in German. After 1940 this linguistic isolation came to an end. In its new, English-speaking, form the work of the Institute took on a more cautious, conventionally liberal-democratic tone, appropriate to its somewhat precarious status in exile. A further element of Americanisation was its involvement in collective projects of a broadly empirical nature. First, there were its studies of anti-Semitic prejudice, in which the school's leaning towards theory was shown in the rejection of the simple questionnaire technique followed by naive American sociology for a method of interpretative interviewing. Then, after Adorno had followed Horkheimer to California (he went there for reasons of health), there was the massive inquiry which issued in the six volumes of *The Authoritarian Personality*, a study of rigid, aggressive conformism, anticipating the informal concept of current, everyday social thinking of the "hard hat."

It was not only language that isolated the school from their environment in exile. There was also their money, which enabled them to keep themselves institutionally to themselves. With commendable prescience they had got their endowment from the Weil family out of Germany at the time the Nazis were coming to power. The calls on it were heavy after 1940 and many members of the school found themselves in service to the US government. But an independent nucleus was always preserved.

THERE WAS ONE GROUP of American, perhaps one should say New York, intellectuals at the height of their powers and cohesion in the 1940s with whom the members of the Frankfurt school in exile had a large affinity of interests and with whom, had they not been so self-enclosed, they might have communicated fruitfully. The circle associated with *Partisan Review*, edited by Philip Rahv and William Phillips, had a very Horkheimerian constellation of interests: Marx, Freud and avant-garde art and literature. Both groups had been driven from orthodox, Moscow-defined Marxism by the degradation of Stalinist tyranny, its ossification of thought, its enslavement of art and literature to propaganda, its maniacal vilification of everything in contemporary culture, from Freud to surrealism, that was not an obvious instrument for the immediate purposes of Russian state power. But, philosophically, the *Partisan Review* circle were attached to the reigning New York liberal philosophy, Dewey's socially concerned pragmatism, which saw science, not as an obscurantist fetish, but as man's best resource for liberation and progress.

Horkheimer was aware of *Partisan Review*. A reference to it in his *Eclipse of Reason* is one of the small signs that show it not to be a work of more or less traditional Hegelian piety about the capacity of reason to establish ends and not merely to find means for them. But it is a critical reference, a rejection of the view that current hostility to science expressed what Sidney Hook called "a new failure of nerve."

After the War was over the Frankfurt school looked back to Europe and in 1949 Horkheimer, Adorno and Pollock returned to Frankfurt itself, where Horkheimer became rector of the university some years later, although Marcuse and Löwenthal remained in the United States. Their main concern in this later period was what they saw as the skill of late capitalism in the manipulation of men, the erosion by various means—in particular by deluging people with commodities which the culture industry worked to convince them they really wanted—of individual, critical, protesting thought. But, when radical students did protest, in the interests of a liberation that went far beyond release from economic exploitation, their response was unenthusiastic. The dominant style of student radicalism, its barbaric irrationality and destructiveness, its pursuit of instant, infantile gratifications, was repulsive to them.

The conflict was symbolised by the notorious occasion when students disrupted a lecture of Adorno's by getting a naked girl to go up and display herself to him at the rostrum. As Jay observes, "the Institute's members may have been relentless in their hostility towards the capitalist system but they never abandoned the life-style of the *haute bourgeoisie.*" One feature of that life-style was a conception of the university as sacred ground. But it could be said that the Frankfurt school had brought it on themselves, by their attacks on the "instrumental reason" which it is the prime activity of universities to exercise and develop, and their view that a full realisation of the utopian possibilities available to man involved the fundamental liberation of primary, Freudian instincts.

SINCE THE RETIREMENT and death of most of the leading figures in the first generation of the school their work has been vigorously continued by others, most notably Jürgen Habermas and his pupil, Albrecht Wellmer. Habermas is as obscure a writer as Adorno, although his inscrutability is of a different kind. Adorno's writing is wild, rhapsodic and sibylline, the sort of tumultuous free association of ideas

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that might be encountered at a very highbrow party very late at night.[5] Habermas, on the other hand, is a parody of a German professor and writes with a knotted involution beside which the works of Kant seem like the directions on a tin of soup.

Three of his works are available in translation: *Toward a Rational Society*, *Knowledge and Human Interests* and *Theory and Practice*.[6] The first of these is a collection of scattered essays, three on universities and the student rebellion, three on the social role of science and technology. The last of them, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology' ", is a more than usually straightforward presentation of the theme that traditional, orthodox Marxism gives an inadequate account of class-conflict and ideology for our scientific and technological age.

He describes *Knowledge and Human Interests* as "a historically oriented attempt to reconstruct the prehistory of modern positivism." It starts from Marx and Hegel and takes in Comte, Mach, Peirce, Dilthey, Freud and Nietzsche. The "positivism" at which it is directed could as well be called scientism, the idea that all true knowledge is scientific in the sense of the natural sciences. The same historical orientation is present in the essays which make up *Theory and Practice*, the bulk of which are reinterpretations of Hegel and Marx.

Habermas brings more to critical theory than an astounding professorial heaviness and density. Where his predecessors had called on Freud for a less crude and nebulous conception of human happiness than Marx's—negatively freedom from economic exploitation, positively a vague notion of doing what one wants to—Habermas sees in the psychoanalytic relation between therapist and patient an illuminating image of the role of the social theorist, who is to render those to whom he speaks autonomous by enabling them to understand their own situation in the social world. Another novelty is the favourable view he takes of the later Wittgenstein: for seeing that aspects of language are rooted in "forms of life", for seeing philosophy as a procedure for releasing men from bewitchment by language and for arguing that human actions cannot be causally explained in the way that merely natural happenings can be.

A LESS DEMANDING MODE of approach to the most recent developments of Critical Theory is provided by the three connected essays that make up Wellmer's *Critical Theory of Society*.[7] In the first of them the school's standard objections to positivism are presented, with reference, among others, to Popper and Carnap, who appear, quite recognisably, as theorists and partisans of the "empirico-analytical" conception of science. The second is an historical excursus which persuasively argues that Marx himself, for all the value of his critique of fetishism and false consciousness, was too much of a positivist, that he treated consciousness too much as an epiphenomenon of material processes and wrongly supposed freedom to be the inevitable outcome of economic necessity. In the course of the essay Wellmer insists, in the anti-Leninist manner of Rosa Luxemburg, that the revolutionary movement must realise social freedom within itself if it is to impart such freedom to society as a whole. In the concluding essay he suggests that Horkheimer's account of Marx as an authentic dialectician is more a critical revision than a straight interpretation of intent. Marx was not, in his view, free from the notion that it is man's purpose to control nature, a notion that leads to the repressive "denial of nature in men" and to the control of men by more obvious instruments of social domination.

BEFORE I TURN to the statement and criticism of the main principles of the critical theory of society there are two other works that I should mention. The first of these is *Aspects of Sociology*,[8] a collective work by the restored Frankfurt Institute for Social Research that first came out in German in 1956. Originally presented as radio broadcasts, they have a fairly high degree of intelligibility, described by Horkheimer and Adorno in their preface as a "loose, improvisatory character." The basic principles are first set out: the need for a social theory that is "critical", not barely descriptive, and that treats society as a totality, drawing on psychology, history and economics, not as an array of reified groups composed of abstract individuals. Depth psychology is called on for investigation of the masses; culture, an ethical and spiritual concept, is contrasted with the atomistic and material notion of civilisation. The second half of the book contains chapters on the fields of the Institute's more empirical research: the sociology of art and music, the family, prejudice and ideology.

Another useful introductory book, although it aims to do more than serve as an introduction, is Trent Schroyer's *The Critique of Domination*[9]

[5] *Negative Dialectics*. Translated by E. B. ASHTON. *The Jargon of Authenticity*. Translated by KNUT TARNOWSKI and FREDERICK WILL. By THEODOR W. ADORNO. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.95, £2.75.

[6] *Toward a Rational Society. Knowledge and Human Interests. Theory and Practice*. By JÜRGEN HABERMAS. Heinemann Educational, £1.50, paper 75p; £3.50, paper £1.75; £4.00, paper £1.80.

[7] *Critical Theory of Society*. By ALBRECHT WELLMER. Herder & Herder, $6.95.

[8] *Aspects of Sociology*. By THE FRANKFURT INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH. Heinemann Educational, £1.40.

[9] *The Critique of Domination*. By TRENT SCHROYER. George Braziller, $8.95.

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The Heritage of Sociology
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which has the advantage of up-to-dateness, one of its seven chapters being on Habermas. Schroyer writes with an almost pedestrian lucidity that is a welcome change and he shows a measure of American pragmatism, or perhaps one should say practicality, in firmly relating the elevated generalities of Critical Theory to the actual historical situation of late capitalism in America.

The first two chapters, following a standard, but usefully clear, introduction on "the need for critical theory", discuss alienation: from culture in Hegel and from work in Marx. Hegel had the better conception of what alienation was, but unlike Marx, no proper understanding of how recognition of it was related to struggle against domination. In the next two chapters the original case of the Frankfurt school against positivist social science is expounded and its further development by Habermas outlined. In the three concluding chapters Schroyer moves off on his own. He maintains that the critical theory of the "cultural Marxists" must be reunified with original Marxism and that it must stimulate empirical research into "contemporary domination" if it is to be more than "an abstract utopian ideal for estranged intellectuals." In the final chapter the concepts of Critical Theory are brought interpretatively to bear on some of the actual facts, pretty broadly sketched, of present American society.

Schroyer is very much his own man: he has an almost Boy-Scout impatience with what he suggests are the self-indulgences of Marcuse (in pessimism) and of Habermas (in hyper-scholarly refinement). Critical Theory, excited by the inadequacies of orthodox Marxist practice, has, he clearly feels, been used far too much for the evasion or deferment of practice and not enough for the contribution to a more rational and effective practice that he believes it qualified to make. This is critical theory in a generally clean-cut and open-necked form, remote from the respectively lugubrious and rococo involutions of Marcuse and Habermas. The vernal and sanguine activism that leads Schroyer to dissent from them makes him a conveniently incisive recorder of what their views essentially are.

THE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE of the Frankfurt school can be summarised in four principles.

(1) *The Critique of positivism.* The prevailing positivist or scientistic conception of social science is a form of false consciousness which reifies or fetishises what are really humanly alterable processes, endorses the status quo under a misleading veil of value-neutrality and at once ideologically encourages and supplies the instruments for prevailing varieties of social domination.

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(2) *The idea of critical theory.* An adequate social theory must embody a critical exposition of the irrational dominativeness of society as it is, and can do so only by a philosophical apprehension of society as a totality of humanly alterable processes, not as a plurality of reified fetishes, and in a historical, not abstractly timeless, way.

(3) *The critique of Marx.* For all the excellence of his synthesis of Hegel and materialism, Marx is defective in supposing, through insufficient emancipation from positivism, that the proletariat will inevitably bring about a revolution that will eliminate alienation and dominance; he treats thought too much as an epiphenomenon; his conception of what men need to be alienated from is too narrowly economic, the causes of human misery and frustration include, but go far beyond, the existing system of property-relations.

(4) *The critique of present society.* Advanced industrial society, in its communist as well as in its late capitalist form, is irrational; in it men are both politically and economically dominated from outside; but, through cultural manipulation, they are lulled into a false acquiescence in their condition at the expense of the real interests of human nature.

HOW WELL-FOUNDED IS the critical theorists' rejection of positivism? It seems to maintain that positivist social science is both false and undesirable. At the outset there is a measure of inconsistency between these two claims. If positivist social science is false how does it manage to supply an effective social technology for the socially dominative purposes it is alleged to endorse? Critical Theorists are far from questioning the instrumental competence of the instrumental reason used by the agencies of domination. It would be more reasonable to say that they exaggerate the extent to which the governments of advanced societies have reduced their citizens to a condition of passive, ideologically narcotised submissiveness.

It is certainly true that most of those who believe that, if there is to be any well-founded social theory, it must be (in the sense objected to) positivistic, are far from dogmatic about its success so far in combining approximation to truth with substantial content. The most intellectually impressive bit of positivist social theory, namely theoretical economics, is abstract, hypothetical and of rather precarious application to the economic facts of life. Where positivist social theory is directly applicable to the facts, as in the more empirical parts of sociology, it seems too often to be a mass of desultory fragments and to be rather trivial and obvious. Theoretical sociology, on the other hand, has all the abstractness of economics without its clarity and definiteness of concepts and without its internal intellectual rigour.

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Some light on the claim that positivist social theory is false may be gained from considering the doctrine of Marx that inspired it: namely, that classical political economy is a form of false consciousness. The error of the classical economists, for Marx, is that they fetishise or reify human processes into substantial things. Against that it may be replied that positivist social theory is generally committed to methodological individualism, the insistence that trans-human social objects (institutions, groups, social systems and movements) are nothing more than individual human beings related to one another and interacting in certain specific ways. The reducibility of social objects was asserted in explicit opposition to the Hegelian doctrine of objective mind, which seems to hold that institutions and so forth transcend the individuals of whom they are apparently composed and that institutions determine men rather than the other way round.

What Marx really seems to have been getting at is a tendency, undoubtedly present in the orthodox economics of his time, not so much to treat abstractions as substantive things, but to treat them as *unalterable* things. The "iron law of wages" is one pertinent example. Another is Malthus's law of the necessarily greater increase of population than of food supplies. Not only did 19th-century positivists assert as categorical necessities what were in fact connections dependent on conditions that were not themselves unalterable; they typically used these in a socially pessimistic way, to prove the impossibility of morally desirable schemes of social reform. But the fact that, in their unconditional form, these laws of immutable necessity have been refuted is something from which positivist students of method have learnt. *If* the population always more than reproduces itself and *if* food supplies always stand in a fixed or decreasing ratio to the amount of labour applied to their production, starvation must follow of necessity. But the *ifs* have to be taken seriously. However reasonable and familiar the suppositions they introduce may be, those suppositions are not themselves necessarily true. It may be added, *ad hominem*, that Marx was very much in the iron laws business himself. In objecting to his notion that socialism is inevitable the Critical Theorists are consistently pointing this out.

MARX MAY WELL HAVE BEEN correct in supposing that ideological preferences encouraged 19th-century economists to ignore the conditional nature of their predictions of the inevitable outcome of current tendencies. Nevertheless they went wrong, not because they were positivists but because they were bad positivists, led by the emotional attractiveness of not unreasonable assumptions into taking those assumptions to be categorical necessities. Furthermore, the fact that their assumptions were ideologically inspired does not itself show that they were false. Only the empirical facts to which the assumptions refer could do that. What it can do is serve as an explanation of the mistake that they made.

Positivists, then, are, if anything, less given to reification of non-human social objects than Hegelians. The allegedly mistaken consequence of reification—that of treating social laws as categorically and unalterably necessary—is simply a mistake and no part of positivist method. It is a mistake that may well be caused by ideological preference but, as the example of Marx himself shows, it is one that is not confined to defenders of the status quo. In any case the ideological attractiveness of a belief to a particular person may explain why he believes it, but is in no way a proof of the falsity of the belief and only weak and indirect evidence of its falsity.

THE UNDESIRABILITY of positivism is argued by Critical Theorists on the ground that it is an implicit, and to that extent deceptive, kind of propaganda for the status quo. This is more a matter of bare assertion than of argument. Such sketches of argument as appear are far from persuasive.

In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment* Horkheimer and Adorno maintain that a love of fact is somehow psychologically equivalent to a fear of social change. Someone hostile to social change may well be inspired by that feeling to factual inquiry in the hope that it will reveal that the change he dislikes is impossible or will have side-effects that everyone would wish to avoid. But, equally, someone in favour of social change may be induced on that account to seek out the alterable conditions of the state of affairs he deplores so as to set about altering it effectively. Are textbooks of pathology really covert propaganda in favour of disease? If I say that you have egg on your tie am I implicitly praising this eccentric type of ornamentation?

It is, no doubt, true that a possible use to which the findings of positivistic, fact-loving social scientists may be put is the manipulation of the discontented masses for the sake of preserving the status quo. If those findings are, in the straightforward, empirical sense, true they may help to preserve it. But they can just as well be used for the opposite purpose, just as a sub-machine-gun can be used for one purpose by a policeman and for an opposite one by a terrorist or freedom-fighter. Sometimes an increase of knowledge leads to an increased sense of impotence (whether cheerful or melancholy); but sometimes it leads to an increase of power, whether to preserve or to change. In general, Critical Theorists supply no reason whatever for supposing that the exclusive

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connection they believe to hold between positivism and the defence of the status quo actually obtains.

I am not saying that there is no evidence; only that they do not bother to collect it. The fact that sociologists were involved in "pacification" programmes in Viet Nam no more proves the point than the fact that Stalin smoked a Dunhill pipe (cf. Djilas: *Conversations with Stalin*) proves that he was really a British agent.

A BETTER CASE THAN they make out could be made. Classical economics can be used very readily as an apologetic. It seems to imply that under competitive capitalism, utility is maximised. But there are two large and familiar logical jumps in that inference. In the first place actual capitalism only very distantly realises the conditions of utility-maximisation: it has always been riddled with theoretical "imperfections", of competitiveness and of knowledge. What is more, the utility realised is of a pretty non-Benthamite kind; it is distorted by the way in which effective demand is distributed. Finally, the whole range of human satisfactions is far from covered by the utilities that enter into the workings of the capitalist market. All the same classical economics does incline to represent the system it analyses as the paradigm of rationality in choice.

It would be relevant to inquire to what extent positivist social theorists have in fact been determined partisans of the status quo. It is often said that the great sociological theorists, enchanted by the complex equilibrium of the social system, are largely conservatives, fearful of radical change. It would be more correct to say that they were pessimists. But so might any student of the outcome of revolutions come to be. And pessimism is far from peculiar to positivists. It is poignantly present in the later writings of the old guard of the Frankfurt school, particularly Marcuse and Adorno.

Adorno somewhere compares the positivists' outlawing of speculation to the prohibition of liquor, as leading only to more and worse of what it aimed to prevent. There is a comic element to the comparison, which a sociologist of knowledge might impute to the fact that Adorno's father was a wine-merchant. Drunkenness is, after all, a social problem. The swilling of Hegel is not always a very beneficial undertaking. If he is a critical theorist then Critical Theory can certainly endorse the status quo as much as positivism is alleged to.

THERE IS NEITHER SPACE nor need to consider the other three principles at any length. The weaknesses of Critical Theory are plainly implied by the deficiencies of its exponents' attack on positivism. What it amounts to, in concrete terms, is some exceedingly dubious, abstract and unargued methodology at one extreme; some questionably empirical, even if quite suggestive, research on comparatively detailed issues (such as the decline of the Family and anti-Semitic prejudice) at the other, and, in between, a body of vigorous and interesting cultural criticism.

This last element is what really counts. The ideas of the Critical Theorists about mass culture as a manipulative device for the containment of social discontent—or about the need for a broadly psychoanalytical supplement to the Marxist conception of human fulfilment—carry out, in heavy philosophical and sociological disguise, the sort of task performed by Matthew Arnold in the 19th century and George Orwell in this one. It might be said that the intensification of the intellectual division of labour has undermined the business of cultural criticism. Academics abstain from it because of a positivistic conviction that they should stick to their professional lasts. Literary intellectuals, intimidated by academics, either avoid it or go in, like Norman Mailer, for extravagant, subjective gesturing. So it could be said that the thick crust of philosophico-sociological word-play in which the members of the Frankfurt school wrap their more penetrating thoughts is simply a protective device. If there is anything in this idea, it must seem that with Habermas the pie is nearly all crust and no filling.

The Frankfurt school's critique of Marx is reasonable enough, but it does not depend logically on their more abstract philosophical doctrines. Many would agree that a liberating revolution is not inevitable, that ideas have a real social influence, and that Marx's conception of human fulfilment is limited, hopelessly indeterminate in its positive aspects, and utopian in a bad, wishful-thinking, sense of the word. But such agreement does not extend to the assumption that concern with factual truth, a commitment to logic and the rules of evidence, necessarily obstructs an interest in the improvement in the social condition of mankind.

THE CRITICAL THEORISTS contend that contemporary society is irrational. That is entirely acceptable if it means that society can be improved, that many of its institutions do not serve the purposes that men want them to, or do so only at an extravagant cost. But to claim, as they go on to do, that it is uniquely and hyperbolically dominative is surely rhetorical guff. In advanced societies resistance to conformism is at an unprecedented level. It is the subjects of General Amin and Chairman Mao who are really dominated and those tyrants, like Henry VIII and Nicholas I of Russia, have managed to achieve their effects with no reliance whatever on the findings of positivist social theory.

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Andrew Waterman

An Ulster Garland

Close by my kitchen window juts
a wall, rich-textured, scarred
brickwork of ochre, grey and red
many times cemented, showing
faint whitewash from before
the house was last patched up.
And where the roof of split slates slopes
to its corner has somehow taken
root among fissures a sprig
of wallflowers, arching
luminous now in the late sunshine.

Delicate, the flowers
have survived nights, and many downpours,
found sustenance amid crumbling.
I have come to expect them.

No, they would not, should it come,
prevail against bulldozer, or bomb;
nor admit their relevance.
And should these petals be torn by explosion,
buried deep under rubble, so
each unique thing must be lost, and is
irrevocable; yet always

others continue, reappear
contriving such root somewhere, so
configured on moving skies.

I drop my gaze on close
unfocused roofline ridges set
at jarring angles.
This
is Ireland now, where mobs command
and kill, and terror grips.
"The power system is at breakdown point."

Lightless, I look
again for the yellow flowers upon
their brink; also remark
among the streets' cross-hatching sprays
of answering greenery, deepening
as day ebbs; in low
untended yards, how cranesbill, vetch,
sweetrocket, speedwell, flowers
run wild I have no name for,
sustain their points of colour; and grass
persists, unorganised. By kind
pervasive to outlast
what coming darkness.

26 May 1974

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Lawrence Durrell

A Patch of Dust

In all this summer dust O Vincent
You passed through my loyal mind,
And I saw the candlepower of stored light,
Like water in the humps of camels or in
Canopies of fire smouldering in volcanoes
Like ancient prostitutes or doges.
Memory giving the ikon of love a morbid kiss!

It doesn't matter; in the silent night
Fragrant with the death of so many friends, poets,
The major darkness comes and art beckons
With its quiet seething of the writer's mind.

Your great canvas humming like a top.
But the terror for me is that you didn't realise
That love, even in inferior versions, is a kind
Of merciful self-repair. O Vincent you were blind.
Like some great effluent performer
Discharging whole rivers into hungry seas.
I do not mean the other kind of love,
Born in newspapers like always exchanging
Greasy false teeth. Not of that kind.

In these shining canvases I commend
A fatal diagnosis of light, more light;
Famous last words to reach the inessential.
They seem to assume that death is unnecessary
And in discreet images make ethical strife stationary,
Signposting always desires at bay.
Goodness! It is canny in its way.

Because the irritation of light leads onwards
Towards blindness which is truth, an unknowing,
And the constraints of unlucky companionship
Hinder like a foolish marriage. One must act.
It is no good explaining things with unction,
You will never get beyond their primal function.

But you directly saw the splendour of the
Dying light redeemed. Have mercy on us!
You went mad, they say, the companionship
Of angels grew too loud to bear. You felt
That what was done was quite beyond repair.
So madness, why not? An irrational respect
For tin or pincushions, a whole architecture.
The girl you loved was grave yet debonair
Like the French whore I live with I suppose.
And dying of self-importance is the usual thing;
The creed of loneliness is all that's left,
And art, the jack o'lantern to console and punish.
All this I saw in a patch of dust at St Remy
During the fatal year of 1974.

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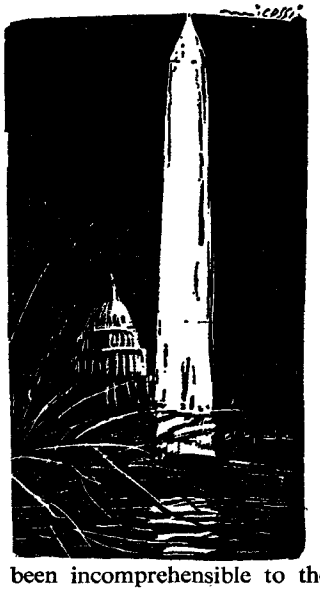
AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Amerenglish

By Ian M. Ball



IN THE LATE 1950s, when American scandals were of far smaller calibre, British correspondents based in New York had the task of explaining to a Fleet Street readership the developing furore over "disc jockey payola." And how many did so, I wonder, aware that even five or ten years previously those two terms, *disc jockey* and *payola*, would have been incomprehensible to the average Englishman?

A colleague of mine consulted his paper's style book under the heading of Barred Americanisms and decided that "disc jockey payola scandal" should correctly be rendered in English-English as "wireless gramophone-records programme commentators' bribery scandal." He persevered with this construction for two or three days until an exasperated foreign editor cabled back to him: "WILL ACCEPT FUTURELY 'DISC JOCKEY' and 'PAYOLA' IN QUOTES AS UNAVOIDABLE AMERICANISMS."

Clearly, in a world accelerating to an American tempo, there was no room for wireless gramophone-records programme commentators, whether or not they were on the take. In the interval, *disc jockey* has shed its quotation marks and is used almost to the point of tedium by the British press. As for *payola*, I noticed the other day a letter-writer to *The Times* using the word shorn of that cloak of inverted commas which was once essential for (English-English) acceptability. I would guess that in a few years' time, only English-English pedants (or perhaps branch meetings of Archaics Anonymous) will still be rendering *payola* with scornful ticks fore and aft.

Good or bad. . . .?

We were talking here about language trends, not social ones, and the verdict, I feel, can only be that the nifty little infiltrators usually wind up making a positive contribution. The foreign body that is assimilated and produces a pearl? Hardly. But we are talking about an evolving, workable language. And if any tongue lives, spewing out inventions in exuberant mouthfuls and generally spurning the neologisms of Latin and Slavs and Chinese, it is English. Does it matter all that much whether these inventions come from San Francisco or Liverpool, from Fleet Street or East Forty-second Street?

Time needs the word *Beatlemania* to describe a passing frenzy afflicting U.S. teenagers as much as the Fleet Street sub-editor needs the term *commuter* to headline a story about home-going rail chaos. We gave them *hovercraft* and they paid us back for *Beatlemania* by adding *groupie* to the language. *Unisex* and *mini* went westwards, crossing *afro* and *campus* in mid-Atlantic. Who will take issue that any of these words, and thousands of others like them, are not practical, colourful, and accurate?

THE LATE 1950s and the early years of the '60s represent a crucial period here, no doubt because social changes (meaning very largely Americanisation) were occurring throughout the English-speaking world at a galloping pace and language change was following close at heel. *Self-service* was giving way in Britain to *supermarket* because the replacement term was more accurate; the new food emporiums were so totally different from the pre-War British concept of a small, self-service establishment that they had to be given a new title. *U-drive* was a nasty one, foisted on us, I suppose, because it appealed to advertising copy-writers. But *hi-fi* and *stereo* came honestly from the grass roots since the British types who invest heavily in this sort of equipment generally are not the ones to bother unnecessarily about polysyllabic formalities.

And, barely perceptibly, we were beginning to eat and drive and sing and puff our way towards

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verbal togetherness: *French fries* and *dessert*, *fastbacks* and *station wagons*, *vibes* and *rock*, *joints* and *highs*. *Penthouse*, *split-level* and *apartment* crept into the estate agents' advertisements. Even fastidious English writers began casually referring to the *movies*, *paperbacks*, and *T-shirts*. To some extent, slang terms (*fuzz*, *kinky*) started merging trans-Atlantically at a more rapid rate.

English-English and American-English remain distinct languages, a situation which probably would still prevail even if Britain were to be admitted as the 51st State. The differences linger—big differences. Linguistic parochialism is alive and well. It is as true today as it was in Wilde's day (when he observed that "the English have really everything in common with the Americans except, of course, language") or when G.B.S. was moved to make his remark about two countries divided by a common tongue. If there was a need in 1939 for a compendium which Oxford produced (H. W. Horwill's *An Anglo-American Interpreter)*, that need is with us still.[1]

Clearly, the American education system believes that the differences between American-English and English-English are substantial and unlikely to disappear in a generation or two. I was pleasantly surprised—and impressed—recently to notice that the English-course textbooks used by my three young children attending different New York private schools contained sections which dealt specifically with the eccentricities of English-English. How many third-or sixth-graders in Britain, I wonder, are taught that an American is not guilty of sloppy spelling when he writes *maneuver*, *center* or *jewelry*?

The perusal of my children's textbooks was only the most recent in a chain of developments which have brought me face-to-face with the conflicts, often formidable, between the two branches of English. The most enlightening of these experiences was the handling of a book assignment from an American publisher, an exercise I was determined to accomplish in flawless American-English and which I shall discuss later.

IN A BROADER SENSE, HOWEVER, the ramifications of this linguistic schism have dogged my professional life for the past eighteen years. Any British newspaper correspondent reporting from the United States usually stumbles daily upon some minor or major problem in translating American-English for a home audience. Will the phrase *Rube Goldberg device*, in a quoted passage, be comprehensible to someone in Kent? Or should the explanation *Heath Robinson invention* be put in brackets? Have enough British tourists crossed the Atlantic to permit one to refer to *English muffins* without having to add parenthetically "something resembling a crumpet"? A colleague on deadline might shout: "What's the 'English' for a *peanut heaven* on Broadway"? Our word *gods* is unknown in the U.S. Is a Fleet Street audience aware that *bomb* in American theatrical jargon means precisely the opposite of what it does to English theatrical people—a hit on Shaftesbury Avenue, a total flop on Broadway? In a quoted passage, is the American word *booboo* close enough to the English-English *boob* (mistake) to go unexplained? And why did the Americans add the final *oo* anyway?

When *commuter* won grudging acceptance in English-English within the past ten or so years, it ended an irksome problem for British correspondents in the U.S. Until then, in writing about commuters protesting, being snowed in or otherwise made newsworthily unhappy, the serious papers in Fleet Street often resorted to the cumbersome, and inaccurate, translation *railway season-ticket holders*—inaccurate because commuters get to work, of course, by bus and private car as well as by train.

Inexplicably so because it is a relatively new invention, the car/automobile presents a whole jolting assembly line of Anglo-American linguistic differences. Almost every part, it sometimes appears to me, has a different name on one side of the ocean than it does on the other. Our *number plate* becomes their *license plate*; the *hand brake* is the *parking brake*; the *dip switch* turns into the *dimmer switch*; *boot* into *trunk*; *wing* into *fender*; *bulkhead* into *firewall*; *silencer* into *muffler*; *facia panel* into *dashboard*; *roof light* into *dome lamp*; *dynamo* into *generator*; *sump* into *pan*; *starting handle* into *crank handle*; *crown wheel and pinion* into *ring gear and pinion*. And so on. British Leyland Motors has compiled a list of 60 such differences a motorist is likely to en-

[1] Diminished marginally perhaps. Horwill's book made the alarming claim in its preface that if an American were taken suddenly ill while on a visit to London, he "might die in the street through being unable to make himself understood." The situation surely has improved somewhat over the past 35 years; but I once witnessed the horror on the face of an American when an English doctor treating him for an open wound said he was about to put some *lint* on it. To the patient *lint* meant only one thing—non-sterile flecks of fabric that must be brushed off a dark suit. Its English-English meaning—surgical dressing—has never entered American-English. If this wounded American had been told he was being taken to the *operating theatre*, staffed by *theatre sisters*, his alarm probably would have deepened. In American-English, *operating room* is the only term used and our adaptation here of the word *theatre* makes them shake their heads over the skittishness of the Mother Tongue.

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counter when travelling in strange territory on one or the other side of the Atlantic among people who, theoretically, speak his own language.

The automotive field offers some examples of the American desire to eliminate any suggestion of indelicacy in labelling mechanical parts. They spurn our descriptive term *grease nipple*. To them it is a *grease fitting*. Similarly, when the word *cock* turns up in English plumbing terminology, the Americans manage a euphemistic replacement.[2]

WHILE I WAS PREPARING this article, I set a modest test in English-English for an American woman, aged about 40, well-educated, who has visited England more than a dozen times although never lived there. I limited myself to *OED* and common usage; it would have been too easy to stump her with gems of Cockney rhyming slang or Yorkshire argot. I composed the following piece of nonsense:

> "I was wearing a bespoke suit, with gongs, and was sitting in a bath-chair in a lay-by on the arterial road, when I saw first a panda car, then a milk-float, followed by a pantechnicon and an articulated lorry. The driver of the lorry, oddly enough a real blimp, stopped, got out and asked if I was carrying a biro. It transpired that he was hauling a load of geysers, immersion heaters and loofahs for the ironmongers on the front. He said he had heard there was trouble locally in the mains in town and he was searching for a blower. I told him there was a kiosk ahead, just past the pillar-box.

The following words she found totally perplexing: *bespoke*; *gongs* ("Is it a fancy word for epaulettes over there?"); *bath-chair* ("Sounds like something you dry yourself on."); *lay-by*; *panda car* ("Making a delivery to the zoo?"); *milk float* ("A soda-fountain concoction obviously, but what's it doing on a road?"); *pantechnicon*; *articulated lorry* ("A talking truck?"); *blimp* (she guessed wrongly that he was grossly overweight); *biro* ("Is it a kind of pistol?"); *geysers*; *immersion heaters* ("For a sauna bath maybe?"); *loofahs*; *ironmongers*; *front*; *mains* (" 'Trouble locally in the mains' sounds like a minor revolt in the municipal council."); *blower*; *kiosk* and *pillar box*.

RUSSELL BAKER, *The New York Times'* droll answer to Art Buchwald, may have encountered some or all of these Englishisms when he began one desperate column under a London dateline with these words: "One of the hardest languages for an American to learn is English." It can, of course, be mastered, given sufficient exposure to English speech and writing, and assuming a decent level of intelligence on the part of the student. Only the other day, an American surgeon boasted to me that as a result of half-a-lifetime's travelling between the U.S. and London, he was now able to "handle correspondence impeccably in both languages." If so, he is a notch above many professional writers in Britain, including, I fear, those who dictate style on *The Economist* and other serious journals. In the face of rigid British usage, these writers insist on using the Amerenglish term *billion* to represent a thousand million. English schoolchildren are still taught that a thousand million is a *milliard* and to be a *billion* it must have yet another three noughts tacked on the end. One day, if we don't get our billions and milliards in order we shall make some cataclysmic *boob/booboo* in a loan application or a trade deficit statement or a joint space endeavour.

Occasionally, I have been asked by American friends, setting out unescorted down the by-ways of Anglican usage, to give them cautionary advice for the journey, early warning of the linguistic ambushes they are most likely to run into.

In this respect, there are certain notorious "don'ts" which are now so clichéd I include them here only for the sake of completeness. *Fanny*, of course, is at the top of the list. I shall long recall the parting words spoken to the guest-of-honour at a farewell party for an American journalist bound for a London posting: "For chrissake, remember that *fanny* to them describes the vulva!" (In American-English, it means, cosily, simply the female bottom.) *Pussy* falls into the same category. An Englishman could encounter a strange Ms. holding a kitten in her lap and say to her, quite politely, "May I see (or hold, or stroke) your pussy?" If he were to make the same remark to an American girl in a similar situation he would most likely—or used to—get his face slapped. On a similar level, Americans and Englishmen have to be fully briefed on the conflicts that arise on different sides of the water over the use of the term *knock up*. Legion are the number of English maidens who have retired red-faced for the evening after asking their American hosts to "make sure you knock me up early in the morning."

MY LIST OF AMBUSH-WORDS for American friends making a first journey into our *lingua incognita* could run to many pages. I shall confine it to the crucial ones:

Lashings (not *scads*); *plimsolls* (not *sneakers*);

[2] And while American-English has found a need for the English-English *tit-bits*, it renders it instead as *tidbits*. Likewise, *smut in the eye*. Too coarse for American speech. An American gets a *cinder* in his eye. Did his Puritanical forbears decide the English-English was somehow not nice?

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afters or *sweet* (not *desserts*); *transfer charges* (not *collect*); *lag* (for insulating a house); *gormless*; *hire purchase* or *never-never* (not instalment plan); *jerry* (not *pottie*); *gen*; *nobble*; *note* (not *bill* when talking of money); *goods train*; *accident tout* (not *ambulance chaser*); *freehold* (not *title*); *hat trick*; *guard's van* (not *caboose*); *gone for a burton*; *fug*; *punnet*; *paraffin* (not *kerosene*); *point* (not *electrical outlet*) *mineral* (for soft drink); *prang*; *pelmet* (not *valance*); *gaffer*; *blighter*; and so on. (Other terms which normally would appear on such a list have already been mentioned.)

I make a point of warning Americans (who now, thankfully, know they can visit Britain and obtain in most places drinks that are throat-searingly cold) that there remains a difference in nomenclature when it comes to ice. When a pub-keeper asks an American if he would like a *block of ice* in his drink, this conjures up in the latter's mind a piece of ice produced in a commercial ice plant and roughly the dimensions of a large suitcase. He soon learns that *block of ice* means simply *ice cube.*

A SPLENDIDLY COMPLETE BOOK, which humbles these informal lists of mine, has recently been published in the U.S. and it should clear up as much of the misunderstanding as can feasibly be resolved in a century or two. It is in lexicon form, bearing the title *British Self-Taught: With Comments in American.*[3] It runs to 474 pages and contains well over 3,000 entries. Significantly, it weighs four or five times as much as the dictionaries American tourists take with them to the Continent (*French Self-Taught*, *Portuguese Self-Taught*). Is there a market among Americans for *British Self-Taught*? Well, it first appeared last year, has already sold out two printings and a third, with a vast addendum, is on its way now to the printers. It has now been published in Britain.

The author is not a professional lexicographer but an American lawyer, Norman W. Schur, who practises in New York and London, where he has a special licence from the Home Office. He commutes between an 18th-century house in Connecticut and a 16th-century Tudor cottage in Hawkhurst. If he finds shelter in the past, he is very much, and gamely, grappling with the problems of the Anglo-American present.

For years, Schur, as a hobby, jotted down lists of Anglicisms which fascinated him. Soon the pastime developed into a preoccupation. "The list grew and grew and eventually reached

[3] *British Self-Taught: With Comments in American.* By NORMAN W. SCHUR. Macmillan, $6.95; Johnston & Bacon, £2.10, paper £1.10.

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the proportions of a glossary," he recalls. An American publisher needed little convincing that the glossary had strong commercial possibilities. Schur is convinced—as I am—that Anglicisms, or *Briticisms* as he prefers, pose thornier problems for Americans than Americanisms do for those accustomed to English-English. The reasons are rooted partly in linguistics but mainly, of course, in socio-economic realities. Tens of thousands of us each week read *Time* and *Newsweek* in trans-Atlantic editions virtually unchanged (apart from the advertisements) from the U.S. editions. By the millions, we read books and paperbacks printed in Britain from the American publishers' plates. And what Americanisms we miss on the printed page, we pick up at the cinema, from television, on the supermarket shelves, and elsewhere.

Alas, no one, to my knowledge, has matched Schur's work in the field of juxtaposing American-English and English-English and produced a handy compendium of spelling conflicts. I discovered this to my pain recently when I accepted a book assignment from an American publisher and, since it was a dollar royalty advance, felt honour-bound to write the manuscript in American-English.

That may sound like a simple and straightforward exercise, but it is not. It involves far more than just dropping the "u" from such words as *harbour*, *colour*, and *neighbour*, and reversing the last two letters in such words as *centre* or *spectre*. Drop every diphthong you've ever known. Declare war on the hyphen, even if you cringe at some of the results: *preeducate*, *coownership*, *minisociety*, *nonethnic*. Lop off the "s" whenever possible so that *towards* becomes *toward*. *Gray*, not *grey*, *defense*, of course, not *defence*. Put an extra "l" amidships in *skilful*. Turn your *-ise* endings into *-ize*.

What gave me the most trouble was the double/single "l" situation. It sometimes seemed that I was spending as much time trotting back and forth between my typewriter and the big black *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary* on a side table to see how many "l"s Americans would like to see in specific words, as I was writing the book itself. You cannot take it for granted that our double "l" preference is always reduced to a single "l" in preferred American spelling.

I dug my heels in on a few points. When the copy-editors, for example, changed my *saleable* to *salable* to conform with *Webster's* first choice, I raised such a fuss that they humoured me by restoring the "e." To my eye, *salable* does not stand as an acceptable alternative to *saleable*.

When I discussed this general subject in a brief article in *The Daily Telegraph Magazine* recently, the size and tone of the reader response surprised me. The letters came generally from bookish types in the non-trendy parts of Britain, and the theme of their remarks was that they could cope perfectly well with American spelling. Publishers were wasting money in de-Americanising works bought from the U.S. "The original American spelling gives authenticity and flavour," was a typical comment. "If publishers wish to avoid queries, they can put 'American spelling retained' on the title page."

When Gollancz brought out the book in Britain, retaining the U.S. style points, only one reviewer blasted me over this. It was a Dublin notice and, while he spoke warmly of the book's contents, the reviewer concluded by suggesting that the English were up to their old tricks by offering Irishmen a book for £3.75 and not bothering to clean up the Yankee spelling.

SO PERHAPS we can co-exist over spelling. The problems arise over the words themselves.

Occasionally, the variations are minor ones, but interesting none the less. How did *ladybird* become *ladybug* by crossing the Atlantic? Why do we say *blue-eyed boy* where an American would use *fair-haired boy*? A hill is a *grade* in America, yet our word *gradient* perplexes them. How did the English *jemmy* become *jimmy* in the U.S.? Why in common American usage is it *far-sighted* and *near-sighted* where we use *long-sighted* and *short-sighted*? Why does an American driver use a *gear-shift* and not a *gear-lever*? Or look through a *windshield* and not a *windscreen*? How did the English *blinkers* become the American *blinders*? Why did we adopt the term *frosted food* not *frozen food*? Why did Americans bother to change *occupier* to *occupant*?

There are endless numbers of examples of these tiny changes and a scholar could probably spend a lifetime in a fruitless search to find their origins. An American athlete, for example, is *in form*, not *on form*. An animal on a U.S. farm is *in heat*, not *on heat*. Americans refuse to touch

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things with a *ten-foot pole* while we use a *barge pole* for this purpose. An American television network reviews a dramatic moment in sport with an *instant replay*; on the BBC or ITV, it's an *action replay*.

Schur offers some interesting examples of these small variations that are nevertheless enduring. He points out that whereas an American *gets the best of* an opponent, the Englishman who triumphs over another *gets the better of* him. "Lest you think that Americans always resort to superlatives," Schur adds, "the reverse is true in the following sense: an American says, 'I'd *better* leave now'; and the Englishman says, 'I'd *best* leave now'."

Why the language split so distinctly into two separate streams I leave to philologists to explain. That no one, to my knowledge, has yet attempted a definitive, updated work on the subject, suggests perhaps the daunting nature of the task.

FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE, I imagine that such an investigation would follow a number of quite separate pathways.

First, there is the American penchant for streamlining things, language included. This goes far beyond the Madison Avenue mind which, if it had its way, would have us all spelling *quick* as *kwik* and *easy* as *E-Z*. It is rooted deeply in American folkways. Long ago, some American decided that the *ing* was unnecessary in *sparking plug* and trimmed it to *sparkplug*. Similarly, while we still speak of a *rowing boat*, the Americans use *rowboat*. The English *washing day* long ago was shortened to *washday* in the U.S. There is a *turning* in an English road, a *turn* in a U.S. one. An English schoolboy talks of the *parting* in his hair; in the U.S., the word is *part*. An American housewife consults a *cookbook*, not a *cookery book*. Wherever possible, Americans lop off a final "s"—*upward*, *northward*, *inning*, *math*. They also eliminate the *ed* that is retained in many English-English terms—*three-room* house (not *three-roomed*); *ice* water (not *iced*); *stocking* feet (not *stockinged* feet).

There are, of course, many occasions when Americans favour a longer word over a perfectly adequate short English one—*apartment* instead of *flat*, *elevator* instead of *lift*, *sanitationman* (or *garbage collector*) instead of *dustman*.

Many words in American usage that jar on English ears have historical origins which are clearly discernible. *Gotten* is perhaps the best example here—a 17th-century English word which fell out of favour at home but which ex-colonists doggedly retained, presumably out of sheer perversity, after the differences of the 1770s.

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(For the same reason, perhaps, the fabric is never called *hessian* in American-English. The only word applied here is *burlap*.)

Another element to be explored in the historical background to the present-day conflicts is the fact that Irish words and speech patterns have had a far more dominant role in shaping American-English than is the case with English-English.

The pace of political life in the U.S. has perhaps left its mark on language. An American politician *runs* for office; an English one *stands*. If the Englishman makes it, he optimistically starts *tabling* resolutions, a set-back for his American opposite number, because a bill *tabled* in America is a bill postponed.

Then, too, there is the innate readiness on the part of someone new to a language (the immigrant's son, the transplanted European intellectual) to tamper with the new tongue in ways that are sometimes outrageous but often ingenious. The two writers who are having the most fun these days in wildly brilliant stylistic experimentation with English—Vladimir Nabokov and Norman Mailer—are not of Anglo-Saxon heritage, with generations of English-speaking forebears.

So America's ethnic mix will have to be examined closely by any philologists seeking answers, as will her greater religious mix. Might not the latter have something to do with this subtle trans-Atlantic difference? When poultry is being carved, the cliché question that pops up at an American table is, "*Who'll have the pope's nose?*" The English term *parson's nose* is virtually unknown.

Another element is that the U.S. has undertaken earnest, scientific studies—official ones, not schemes hatched by individual reformers—to make spelling more logical, whereas we have been content to let the language meander along. Just after the turn of the century, the Simplified Spelling Board proposed a number of spelling reforms which gradually came to be accepted by American educators. The Board did not go as far as many would have wished, but it left a powerful legacy—*catalog, tire, theater, harbor, sulfur, cigaret*, and so on. It also succeeded in banishing the diphthong from American-English. Tenaciously, the *Chicago Tribune* and a few other papers try to carry on the work of the Simplified Spelling Board by insisting that their reporters write *thru* and *frater* (a cargo ship), but they seem to be making little headway. Fonetically, Col. McCormick, you never made it.

AND FINALLY, who really should have the upper hand in deciding the future of English? Or will it simply go on evolving with twin branches that occasionally intertwine and occasionally veer apart? As he did on most topics, H. L. Mencken held strong views on who should be the arbiter of 20th-century English: "When two-thirds of the people who use a certain language decide to call it *freight* train instead of *goods* train, they are right; the first is correct usage and the second a dialect."

Alas, no opportunity presented itself for him to debate this point with one of our better exponents of "dialect" English, Winston Churchill.

In Lieu of Carols

Setting out in darkness this Christmas Eve
I find the countryside is brewing mist
In all its hollows. Out of it the wet
Lane unravels, hatches every yard
A tree, a fence, the dull outline of fields.
My way is to the shop to buy matches.

Beyond the hedge, the black shapes of cattle,
Trampling mudholes, shadow me to the road.
I cannot see their smoky breath, but feel
Its warmth. If there be stars among the sights
The mist has hidden, good! Enough for now
To make my journey following cottage lights.

Frank Ormsby

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THEATRE

The Beaumarchais Phenomenon

By John Weightman

CONTINUING THE POLICY of presenting established French classics in new translations, the National Theatre has now given us, after *The Misanthrope*, a modern version of *The Marriage of Figaro*. This is one of the very few French plays of the 18th century that have survived as living works and, in the general opinion of French critics, it is the dramatic masterpiece of that century. But although the translation is good and the production much more faithful to the historical spirit of the original than is usual in Jonathan Miller's lively re-readings of classic texts, the play has had a curiously uneven reception. The reviews in *The Times* and the *Evening Standard* were dismissive, as if both the choice of play and the production had been a mistake. Yet the audience, on the second night, was extremely enthusiastic, and I myself could not see why my colleagues of the daily press had been so carping. It is true that the performance perhaps left something to be desired, as I shall argue in a moment, but on the whole it was most enjoyable.

A few days later, moved by a patriotic desire to defend a French masterpiece, Baron Guy de Rothschild wrote a letter of protest from the Albany to *The Times*, and drew a riposte from Mr Bernard Levin, who rapped him sharply over the knuckles for failing to understand the right, and indeed the duty, of the critic to say frankly what he thinks, even at the risk of being objectively mistaken. This little flurry made me reflect that, some 200 years after his heyday, Beaumarchais is still running true to form: praised by some, damned by others, finding unlikely defenders and unexpected enemies, at once in and out of favour—and all this at a time when the present holder of the name he invented for himself happens to be H. E. the French Ambassador in London. He himself came to London more than once as a secret agent on behalf both of the last two kings of the Old Régime and of the First Republic, and was even for a while imprisoned in a London gaol. One can imagine how entertained he would have been at the thought that the "Goddams", after a very long interval, have put on his play at their National Theatre and that it has given rise to a dispute between a Rothschild and a Levin, while a descendant of Watchmaker Caron occupies the distinguished position of representative of the Fifth Republic. He might even have been inspired to add a few more epigrams about the ironies of Fate to one of Figaro's monologues.

A FAVOURITE THEME OF HIS, in fact, was the conflict between the individual will and the inconsequentialities of fortune, because the creator of *picaro*-Figaro was himself a picaresque figure, and not one of the minor ones such as abounded in the 18th century, but a really great exemplar, on a level, say, with Jean-Jacques Rousseau or Casanova. A Parisian artisan's son, who rose to be M. de Beaumarchais through charm, intelligence, intrigue, royal favour and the friendship of financiers, he had a career of astonishing ups-and-downs, bristling with anomalies and uncertainties. In a sense, *The Marriage of Figaro* is only the tip of an iceberg, which has not yet been wholly revealed to the general reader, since the Beaumarchais papers (and more particularly the extraordinary correspondence) are still in process of publication. And it is an ambiguous tip, which gives rise to various questions: What sort of play is *The Marriage*? Did Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais intend it to be the play it has become? What exactly went on in Pierre-Augustin's mind?

A FIRST PECULIARITY is that Beaumarchais, far from being a professional author, was an outstandingly gifted Jack-of-all-trades, who composed five plays during the course of his life, in the intervals of making and losing fortunes and being involved in all sorts of financial, political, and amorous intrigues. (In his youth, incidentally, he had invented an improvement in watchmaking and devised pedals for the harp.) Another peculiarity is that three of the plays—the first two and the last—are complete duds, now justifiably forgotten, whereas the third and the fourth, *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, are masterpieces.

A further peculiarity is that both the masterpieces were turned into operas, which have obscured or even obliterated the originals in world opinion. A still further peculiarity is that Rossini's *Barber*, although written in the 19th century, is a perfect musical intensification of the 18th-century impishness of Beaumarchais' *Barber*, whereas Mozart's *Marriage*, although written in the 18th century, lifts the atmosphere of Beaumarchais' *Marriage* from the humorous and averagely human to the sublime. This is a rare, possibly a unique, case of one genius building on

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the work of another and actually improving on it. There is nothing in the play as superb as *Dove sono* or the Letter Duet, because Beaumarchais was never capable of being as lyrically profound in words as Mozart could be in music. It would be unfair to say that Mozart changed clever dross into gold. Beaumarchais' text is far superior to dross; but Mozart, through some miracle, had a pure artistic soul, whereas Beaumarchais' soul was muddied to some extent by contemporary circumstances. He was a notable example of the oscillation, between cynicism and sentimentality, of so many Frenchmen in the 18th century, and of the difficulty they experienced in assembling their personalities to achieve a coherent, central seriousness.

The point can be illustrated by a short description of the three bad plays—*Eugénie*, *Les Deux Amis*, and *La Mère coupable*. They are "bourgeois dramas", *i.e.*, examples of the serious works dealing with contemporary themes that were intended to replace neo-classical tragedy, according to the prescriptions of Diderot, the theorist and practitioner of this new form, to whom Beaumarchais expresses his indebtedness. Unfortunately, the germ of truth in the desire to evolve a new genre to supersede the dead forms of Neo-Classicism was not enough to inspire even one good "bourgeois drama" in the 18th century. The collected dramas of the period make just as dreary reading as the collected neo-classical tragedies. Indeed, they are often neo-classical tragedies in disguise, and the muddle in the minds of the authors is often betrayed by the fact that the important characters are not bourgeois at all, but aristocratic (this is the case, for instance, in *Eugénie* and *La Mère coupable*).

The plot is normally organised as a "weepie", ending in reconciliation. The protagonists are put through fearful trials, which allow them to display their unblemished morality; and they either thaw their persecutors into tearful penitence or foil their wicked plots and send them off, gnashing their teeth, into the outer darkness. In *Eugénie*, a young provincial aristocrat is seduced into pregnancy by a great lord through a fake marriage (*cf.* Richardson); but, after some shilly-shallying, the seducer is converted to a genuine marriage. In *Les Deux Amis*, two virtuous financiers vie with each other in self-sacrifice, and their heroic disinterestedness melts the relatively stony heart of a government official.

La Mère coupable shows the household of *Le Mariage de Figaro* several years later, living in Paris after the Revolution. There is still tension between Almaviva and the Countess, because the latter has had a child by Chérubin; and this child, Léon, is the Count's official heir, the legitimate son having been killed. Almaviva is trying to disinherit Léon, while a wicked traitor, Bégéarss, a former fellow-officer of the long-since dead Chérubin, is exploiting the dissensions to appropriate the family fortune. Figaro, now a faithful old retainer, unmasks the villain; and the way is left clear for the Countess's illegitimate son to marry an illegitimate daughter of the Count after a shower of virtuous tears, during which the terms "Mother!", "Father!", "Brother!", "Sister!", *etc.* are exchanged with that near-incestuous excitement to which the 18th century was so prone.

ALL THIS, OF COURSE, is part of the widespread, and still mysterious, phenomenon of *sensibility*, which runs from the early 18th century into the 19th century and is, for instance, one of the dubious strands in the novels of Dickens. It vitiates a great deal of literature, like a sort of wet rot, and the puzzling thing is that even a highly intelligent man such as Beaumarchais was unaware of it as a collective pressure guiding his pen. It seems clear from his lengthy commentaries on his plays that he never realised the differences in quality between them. He goes so far as to present *Le Barbier de Séville*, *Le Mariage de Figaro*, and *La Mère coupable* as a trilogy, although any average reader would take the third play to be a pathetic attempt by some 18th-century hack-writer to exploit the memory of *Le Mariage* in the weepy vein. Like most 18th-century French authors, Beaumarchais was at his best, and in fact only good, in the comic-ironical style, which—judging from his letters—was the style in which he lived his life. Figaro's famous remark, in *The Barber of Seville*—"I hasten to laugh about everything through fear of being obliged to weep at it"—is highly significant, because the French 18th century, which laughed and wept so much, could laugh well but did not really know how to weep convincingly. Its truest moods, particularly in the last phase just before the Revolution (a period which contained not only Beaumarchais but also the Marquis de Sade, Choderlos de Laclos and Restif de la Bretonne), were the comic and the demonic.

Beaumarchais, for his part, was incapable of creating diabolic monsters, such as Valmont and Merteuil in *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, or the priapic maniacs of *Les cent vingt journées de Sodome*, or the devilish Gaudet d'Arras in *Le Paysan perverti*. But Figaro, in *Le Barbier de Séville*, is a kind of demonic personification of the sexual instinct driving merrily through all obstacles, a mephistophelean Cupid at the service of young love. In *Le Mariage* the ostensible theme is Almaviva's unbridled sexual appetite, which is now seen—but still in the comic mode—as a baleful force, to be negated instead

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of helped. When one is familiar with Laclos, Sade, and Restif, one can feel that Beaumarchais is very close to them, as his outspoken correspondence amply proves. The castle of Acquas Frescas is not as "fresh" as all that, and Count Almaviva is not altogether a "living soul", unless *alma* is taken in the erotic 18th-century sense of "*âme*", *i.e.* semen. It is impossible to say whether Beaumarchais intended an erotic pun, or was using the words in the ordinary sense but indulging in antiphrasis. Probably neither, I should think. The shadow of *Les Liaisons dangereuses* and *Les cent vingt journées* falls across *Le Mariage de Figaro*, and the biographers have often pointed out that, in the course of his career, Beaumarchais himself was not only successively Chérubin, Figaro, and Almaviva, but perhaps also on occasions something considerably worse. However, the indications are that he thought he was just writing another comedy, so that the darker suggestions remain unintentional. In spite of being so clever as a man, Beaumarchais as a genius (one might say) was unconscious, so much so that both the character, Figaro, and the play, *The Marriage*, came to mean much more than he had ever supposed. He was probably as unaware of their potentialities as were the nobles who campaigned so vigorously—and suicidally—for the performance of *The Marriage*, against the wishes of Louis XVI and the more conservative authorities.

IF LOOKED AT in a prosaic light, *The Marriage of Figaro* may appear to be just a superior country-house farce, which starts in a bedroom and ends with a complicated game of hide-and-seek in the garden. The movement of the plot is admirably *endiablé*, and Beaumarchais has woven together, with uncanny skill, ideas and stage devices borrowed from many previous plays. But he seems to have invented little or nothing. The theme of amorous rivalry between servant and master had been dealt with before; the trial within the play was an old trick; and mistaken identities and recognition scenes are as venerable as the theatre itself. Perhaps the one bold innovation was to set the last act in the garden and in the dark, whereas even Molière had contented himself with anonymous drawing-rooms or vague street localities.

But by putting all these things together in a different way, Beaumarchais produced something new. The most obvious difference between *The Marriage* and all the previous French plays of the century is that the *château*, instead of containing only a few characters (as in Marivaux, for instance), is crammed with individuals arranged in social categories and age-groups, all beautifully differentiated and reacting to each other in the most complex fashion. Beaumarchais was no doubt able to achieve this effect because he himself had actually been several of these characters, and because he had had the widest possible experience of human variety. But the result, which he did not foresee and possibly never fully realised at all, was that the household of *The Marriage* was immediately sensed as a microcosm of France, in exactly the same way as the household of *The Cherry Orchard* was to become a representation of Russia more than a century later. Count Almaviva, like Mme Ranevskaya, represents the failure of the mainspring of a whole society. He is foiled in his enterprises at every stage, so that, by the end, the audience feels that Figaro, in a sense, is the unacknowledged master of the *château*, and that his acceptance of his subordinate position is only a provisional arrangement.

The *château* of Acquas Frescas is not, however, straightforwardly a "Heartbreak House", like the Ranevsky estate, because the atmosphere of late 18th-century France was much brisker than that of late 19th-century Russia, and Beaumarchais' temperament was very different from Chekhov's; and in any case he was writing a comedy, not a drama. Mme Ranevskaya is overtly poetic in her fecklessness, and Lopakhin (her equivalent of Figaro), instead of attacking, tries in vain to save her from herself. But there is a good deal of discreet poetry in *The Marriage* too. Although Figaro is so prominent and so lively, he is held in check to some extent by the feminine principle in Suzanne and the Countess. He has been no more sexually abstemious than the Count, but now that he is marrying Suzanne, he finds he has to accept her as a full person on equal terms. In real life, Beaumarchais' amorous involvements were just as multifarious, as untidy, and—in the end—as sordid as the Count's. But the play contains, in addition to the slightly *sensible* plea on behalf of women uttered by Marceline, a suggestion of an ideal male/female relationship such as Beaumarchais himself never seems to have achieved. Similarly, behind the upheavals in the *château*, there is the recurrent 18th-century nostalgia for a Utopian society, consisting of the great house in a pastoral setting, where the *seigneur* behaves with dignity and benevolence, the professional classes fall smoothly into place, and the happy peasants enjoy freedom of speech and express their collective vitality in singing and dancing—the very opposite of the egalitarian ideal of which Figaro was later to become the emblem. The last act can be moving, as well as comic, if the to-ing and fro-ing in the garden is seen as an allegory of the various parts of French society groping in the dark to find each other,

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during the confusion which preceded the Revolution. Their idyllic reconciliation in a final burst of song and dance exists only on the level of the imagination. One cannot watch the comedy without remembering that, in fact, it ended in tragedy.

I REPEAT that Beaumarchais presumably did not intend these effects. There is no sign that he welcomed the Revolution when it came, although he worked for the Republic and occasionally expressed republican sentiments in a conventional tone. He had taken sex quite spontaneously and unwittingly as a symbol of power, just as Laclos did in *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. Almaviva and Figaro strut and pout in opposition to each other but, in spite of Figaro's monologue and the incidental aphorisms about the contingent nature of rank, the two characters are not meant as a flatly didactic representation of the clash between the new emergent bourgeois individual and the obsolescent aristocracy. Beaumarchais insists, in his lengthy stage directions, that Almaviva should be played with a certain grandeur. He himself had bought letters of nobility as soon as he had been in a position to do so, had built an aristocratic town house, and had shared an extremely aristocratic French mistress with the King of Spain. For all his individual pride, he was sensitive to the unique style and elegance of the old French aristocrats, and was not out to degrade them. In a perfect performance of *The Marriage*, Almaviva would be negated without being made to look a fool, and all the details would be exquisitely proportioned.

Here I can voice my slight reservation about Dr Miller's production, which is that it seemed to err a little in the direction of modern vulgarity. Almaviva was sometimes too heavily grotesque. The Countess, although charming, knocked over two armchairs, as if she were a 19th-century, middle-class wife in a Feydeau farce. Suzanne was vital enough, but not altogether refined, while Figaro had unfortunate Cockney barrow-boy inflections and—*horribile dictu!*—actually sat down in the Countess's presence in her bedroom. There may, of course, be no solution to the problem of translating the social minutiae of one culture into those of another, particularly when the first culture has been extinct for nearly two hundred years. But one can only state the fact that an ideal rendering of the play would respect the fragile balance, characteristic of the late 18th century, between formality and informality, deference and outspokenness, individualism and conformism.

PERHAPS, AFTER ALL, it is not so paradoxical that *Le Figaro* should now be the name of a conservative Paris newspaper with none of the disruptive possibilities of *The Marriage*. Despite his involvement in political and financial matters and his eloquent appeals to public opinion during the many *causes célèbres* in which he became embroiled, Beaumarchais was far from being a progressive political mind in the modern sense. His fundamental concern was with his own individual activism, not with general social principles. He was the sort of picaresque hero who accumulates riches and honours as he goes along, but who, in the last resort, is interested neither in becoming established in any humdrum way, nor in improving society, nor in reflecting deeply on its philosophical foundations. He demands freedom, but only so that there shall be no restriction on his pugnacious vitality.

Beaumarchais was so dynamic all through his life that, in studying the innumerable tangled episodes in which he took part, one gets the impression that he sometimes even complicated them deliberately to enjoy the pleasure of his own virtuosity. In this respect, he was at the opposite pole from Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the picaresque hero with no gift for intrigue, who blundered from situation to situation and who was forced, as it were, to use his genius to rethink society as a whole, because he had no understanding of how to manoeuvre within it in its existing state. Beaumarchais could manipulate society, whereas Rousseau had to propose that it should be remade. The jovial, extrovert individualism of the one reinforced the recessive, paranoiac individualism of the other to create an explosive collective situation; and then many real-life Figaros found themselves brandishing *The Social Contract*.

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A Special Book Section

Social Theory

A Glamorous Salon

Isaiah Berlin's Disparate Gifts—By ALAN RYAN

AT THE VERY FIRST LECTURE I ever attended as an undergraduate a clever voice behind me remarked, "Lectures have been obsolete since Gutenberg; it's typical that Oxford hasn't noticed yet." Since I, if pressed, would have guessed that Gutenberg was somewhere in Sweden, I was relieved to discover that the clever voice had borrowed the joke from a previous night's speaker at the Union—John Wain, I think. I discovered almost as quickly that the Gutenberg revolution had reached Oxford. Lectures were sparsely attended, and libraries were over-crowded, for undergraduates had found out that the printed word stuck in the mind more readily than did the spoken word.

None the less, some lecturers could attract large audiences; a few could hold them. A. J. P. Taylor modestly justified his habit of lecturing at nine in the morning by the need to comply with the fire regulations and avoid over-crowding his hearers. But the biggest draw at the box-office were the lectures in which Isaiah Berlin annually conducted a horde of the curious on the Grand Tour from Athens to Greenwich Village—the history of ideas from *The Republic* to *Partisan Review*.

It is, perhaps, misleading to call it a Grand Tour, for that suggests places rather than people, and the most striking thing about these lectures was the extent to which they were about distinct and individual people. Maurice Bowra remarked in his *Memories* on the way Isaiah Berlin in the '30s introduced Oxford to a galaxy of (dead and illustrious) foreigners, all but threatening to fill your living-room with the quarrelling Belinsky and Gogol, with Vico explaining the nature of anachronism to an admiring Herder and Michelet, or with an enraged Marx, denouncing the incurable romanticism and idealism of "that donkey Moses Hess." All the histrionic skills of Berlin as a lecturer were directed to the one end of bringing to life the immortal dead, in order that they and his audience could converse with each other. To the undergraduate coming across all this for the first time, it was like being allowed to sit in on a particularly glamorous *salon*, with no responsibility for its success or failure and therefore no pressure on oneself. It was, of course, enormously enjoyable—just as laughing at really good jokes somehow makes one feel terribly witty, so listening in on this sort of conversation made one feel very much cleverer than usual.

Berlin's lecturing manner was not exactly inimitable; the feeblest undergraduate parody was instantly recognisable. But by the same token it was extremely distinctive. In spite of the enormous speed of the delivery, it was the dramatic pause that worked the greatest charm. Beginning a lecture on Machiavelli with the observation that Machiavelli wrote lucidly and plainly, he would continue: "None the less [long pause] there are no fewer than [long pause] twenty [longer pause] five distinct interpretations of what his views really were" (this last at a great speed). It gave a splendid impression of Berlin rushing upon Machiavelli, then drawing back amazed as he began to count the staggering number of diverse accounts of his ideas. His description of the philosophies of Hegel and Schelling as "dark swamps, into which many men ventured and from which few ever returned" was, in the same way, delivered with such deliberation as to make it entirely credible that "few go there now: *vestigia terrent*."

The problems of cooling this down for the printed page are obvious enough—and even *Karl Marx* still reads in places like the peroration of a lecture after three drastically revised editions. Reviewing *Four Essays on Liberty*, Anthony Kenny rightly complained that once they are deprived of the help given by inflexion and emphasis, sentences of 90 words (there is one of 110 in *Fathers and Children*) fall to pieces in the mind. The trouble is, of course, that the style is in many ways part of the argument, and a less evocative manner would betray the case which Berlin wants to make.

I'VE SAID THAT THE POINT of the lecturing manner was to bring intellectual personalities to life. This

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is dictated as a proper goal of the history of ideas by two of Berlin's guiding beliefs. The first is what he calls the "liberal" inclination to see "tendencies, and political attitudes as functions of human beings" as opposed to the "radical" inclination to see "human beings as functions of social tendencies."[1] This is a major theme of *Historical Inevitability*; and it is one of the grounds of Berlin's dislike of Marx. Whatever virtues Marx possessed—and on the whole Berlin is not grudging about them—there is something repulsive in his attempt to reduce the moral and intellectual passions of individual men to the determined products of class conflict. The second belief is a slightly anxious allegiance to Belinsky. On Berlin's reading, the greatest impact of Belinsky on his liberal and radical friends was to alienate them permanently from any such ideal as "art for art's sake" or "ideas for ideas' sake." The question which Belinsky asked of any work of literature, philosophy or political theory was "what kind of man could think that?", or "what kind of man would I become by thinking like that?"

In *Fathers and Children*, Berlin describes Turgenev's reactions to those (both to Left and Right) who assailed him over his portrait of Bazarov in *Fathers and Sons*. The radicals were outraged because they saw Bazarov as a half-educated, nihilist buffoon, and thought Turgenev was, through him, ridiculing radicalism generally. The conservatives were outraged because Turgenev seemed quite genuinely to sympathise with this hideous creation of his. Turgenev did not reply that both criticisms were a lot of nonsense, that Bazarov was a character in a novel and ought to be judged on pure aesthetic criteria. He spent a great deal of unprofitable effort trying to persuade all sides of the goodness of his motives in drawing Bazarov as he did. For Berlin, too, criticism is in this sense a personal matter. A theory takes its life from the lives of its defenders. Of course, one mustn't exaggerate; ideas have a life of their own, too, and without such a life we could hardly use the ideas to construct a picture of their possessors. None the less, their importance lies in what it is like to believe in them.

This ties in with another of Berlin's standing obsessions—not exactly one which is peculiar to himself, since on his own account it has been the central problem of historiography since Vico. This is the question of how the *Geisteswissenschaften* differ from the *Naturwissenschaften*. The dust over "Historical Inevitability" hasn't settled more than twenty years later, but the central issue of that essay emerges as the issue of the extent to which we can, or should, or must, see history from the participants' viewpoint. Roughly, Berlin's case is that in explaining other people's behaviour we have to employ the categories we employ in making up our own minds what to do. *We* work out what it would be *reasonable* to do, what it would be *best* to do; we assess courses of action and try to pick the best. In doing this, we assume that we are swayed by reasons, not moved by causes of which we have no knowledge. We have, therefore, to make the same assumptions in explaining what other men are up to.

The essay wavers between suggesting that the determinism of scientific history is false and suggesting only that determinism, true or false, is inconsistent with our ordinary ways of speaking about human action. Clearly, the second is the more plausible position, though it is also the weaker position in leaving it wide open whether advances in the human sciences will eventually force us to think of ourselves in very—perhaps as yet unimaginably—different ways.

Berlin sometimes suggests that what is wrong with inevitabilist views of history is that they blunt their adherents' moral sensibilities. He sides with Moses Hess in fearing men who are

> disposed to deceive themselves or others by systematically representing what would normally be recognised as acts of cruelty, exploitation, injustice and oppression as being mysteriously transformed into virtuous actions, or at least means to virtue, by the sanctifying process of historical necessity—the inexorable march of "God in history"—the historical dialectic.

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW of the history of ideas, Berlin's own approach has a very different kind of drawback—not political, but visual. This is that the man of the moment, through whose eyes the world is presently viewed, becomes immensely vivid and his contemporaries correspondingly pale. This in turn can make the hero of one account look mysteriously less attractive in a different context. Thus, in *A Marvellous Decade*, and in his introduction to *From the Other Shore*, Berlin seems to present Herzen as unequivocally the most rational, self-aware and self-possessed of all his liberal contemporaries. He was, of course, quite at odds with the world in which he found himself, both in and out of Russia; but he never sought an escape in utopia. He loathed the complacent stupidity of bourgeois France and England, and he sympathised very deeply with the suffering of the serfs of his native country, whom he wished to see emancipated but not transformed into the proletarians of the West. None the less, in looking for a Russian road to socialism, he did not blink the fact that the rural masses were brutal, superstitious and often deeply

[1] *Fathers and Children* (Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 49–50.

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reactionary. But in *Fathers and Children*, when it is Turgenev's doubts and hesitations that occupy the stage, Herzen appears as he appeared to Turgenev, something of a simple-minded populist, whose need to believe in the imminence of revolution in Russia blinded him to the frailty of its human instruments. There is, doubtless, no real contradiction here—Herzen *did* sometimes put more trust in the Russian masses than mature reflection warranted—but there is a certain awkwardness about the shifting perspective.

ALTHOUGH THIS APPROACH to the history of ideas is so personal, part of Berlin's impact at least must be explained in terms of the large and striking antitheses which he has made famous. The best known "teams" of thinkers are probably the "Hedgehogs" and the "Foxes." But the positive and negative libertarians come close behind; and they turn out on inspection to be alliances of Monists versus Pluralists and Transcendentalists versus empiricists. As an analytical tactic, this division of thinkers into exponents of one half of an antithesis can be criticised—no thinker fits his category exactly, and on Berlin's view of the complexity of truth, he shouldn't do so either. It might also be said that categories as large as this are likely to be short of explanatory power. An early reviewer of *The Hedgehog and the Fox* doubted whether the boxes would hold their contents; more recently, Anthony Arblaster shrewdly, if unkindly, pointed out that the need to produce teams of opponents under each category brought Berlin himself perilously close to the role he deplores—that of the *terrible simplificateur*, ironing out the diversities, denying the importance of the individual awkward case.[2]

Often however the antithesis functions only to start an argument. In *The Hedgehog and the Fox*, the implausibility of the initial line-up is forgotten in the argument that the key to Tolstoy's greatness and to his failures lies in his attempt to subject his perception of the variety and diversity of history to a monistic theory of the direction in which it was moving and the forces which were impelling it—or, as Berlin says elsewhere, that his "whole life bears witness to the proposition to the denial of which his last years were dedicated: that the truth is seldom wholly simple or clear."[3]

THE ANTITHESIS which has aroused the most serious argument is the distinction between posi-

[2] Anthony Arblaster, "Vision and Revision", *Political Studies* (1971), pp. 81–6.
[3] "Tolstoy and Enlightenment", ENCOUNTER, February 1961, p. 40.

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tive and negative conceptions of liberty, to which Berlin's inaugural lecture was devoted. Many critics have accused Berlin of neglecting the way that poverty and ignorance can hinder a person's search for happiness just as effectively as tyranny or legal oppression. Others have argued that Berlin's distinction between *liberty* and *the conditions of liberty*, which meets this first objection, is just a liberal evasion, since poverty, at any rate in a class society, is not a merely natural consequence of nature's stinginess and man's feebleness, but a form of oppression in itself. The propertyless are, in Professor Macpherson's *Marxisant* phrase, the victims of the "extractive power" of the propertied, and an adequate conception of negative liberty would include freedom from that extractive power.[4] An even readier criticism is that it is impossibly hard to attribute a clearly positive or clearly negative conception of liberty to any actual thinker we care to name, for even Hegel, who certainly has *a* positive conception of liberty whereby I am free only when my rational, social self is in command, also stresses the importance of negative freedom —that is, of having a secure area in which no one has the power to compel me to do or not to do anything in particular.

There has been one sustained attempt to show that the whole dichotomy collapses, made by Professor Gerald McCallum, who has argued that there is only one concept of liberty—that of an agent being free from some sort of restraint to do some sort of action—and that liberty is always this triadic relationship between agents, restraints and actions.[5] In *Four Essays on Liberty*, Berlin denies this, and says that a man who gets out of jail is properly said to be free, whether or not we have in mind any action which he is free to do. This doesn't really meet the case. It is surely true that we call a man free when he gets out of jail, just because being in jail is a much larger than usual restraint on practically any action you care to think of.

THE POINT IS, IN ANY CASE, not one on which Berlin needed to insist. If he wants to think in terms of antithetical conceptions, he can surely allow "liberty" to be the name of a triadic relationship, and insist that there are two concepts of human agents closely related to two concepts of what important kinds of action human beings should perform and two concepts of what obstacles there are to their performing them. And this might as well be called "two concepts of liberty." Indeed, if this weren't so, the great variety of topics which Berlin includes in "Two Concepts of Liberty" would have no reason to be there. The chief point which the essay makes is a point about the diversity of goods. The reason why negative liberty—leaving people alone so far as possible—is an important political goal is that there is no *summum bonum* in terms of which to justify interference. It is not a matter of whether it is linguistically proper to call a man "free" because he lives in a democracy or a fiercely nationalistic state; rather, it is a matter of insisting that democratic government, national self-determination and extensive civil rights are different and not always compatible goods.

It is their—often unwilling—perception of this that unites the disparate subjects of several lectures.[6] "The Originality of Machiavelli", for instance, argues that what was so appalling about Machiavelli was not so much his willingness to espouse brutality in politics as the brutality of his insistence that there was *no* natural harmony, that private virtue was certainly virtue but inconsistent with political *virtù*, that saving one's soul was perfectly laudable, but that men couldn't expect to save both their souls and their cities. The point of his lecture on "Montesquieu" is to show how Montesquieu's relativism led him reluctantly to the liberal's acceptance of the diversity of ultimate goods, while Mill, of course, emerges very naturally as a thinker who tries to smuggle liberty, equality, self-determination and so on under the umbrella of utility, only to

[4] C. B. Macpherson, "Berlin's Division of Liberty", Ch. V of *Democratic Theory* (Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[5] Gerald McCallum Jr., "Negative and Positive Freedom," *Philosophical Review*, 1967, pp. 312–24.

[6] In spite of occasional rumours in publishers' catalogues, most of Berlin's lectures and essays remain uncollected in book form. The exceptions are the four essays in *Four Essays on Liberty* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1969): "Political Ideas in the Twentieth Century", "Historical Inevitability", "Two Concepts of Liberty" and "John Stuart Mill and the Ends of Life." Among essays from ENCOUNTER which ought to be more readily accessible are the four instalments of "A Marvellous Decade" (June, November, December 1955 and April 1956), "Russian Populism" (July 1960), "Tolstoy and Enlightenment" (February 1961) and "J. G. Herder" (July and August 1965). "The Philosophical Ideas of Giambattista Vico" appeared in the *Proceedings* of the London Italian Institute, 1959, "Montesquieu" appeared in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1955, "The Originality of Machiavelli" appeared in *Studies on Machiavelli* (G. C. Sansoni, Rome, 1972), "The Life and Opinions of Moses Hess" was published by Cambridge University Press in 1959 (the Lucien Wolff Lecture, 1957), "Does Political Theory Still Exist?" appeared in P. Laslett and W. G. Runciman (eds), *Philosophy, Politics and Society* (second series, Blackwell, Oxford, 1964), "The Concept of Scientific History" appeared in W. H. Dray (ed.), *Philosophical Analysis and History* (Harper & Row, New York, 1966). This is, of course, a very partial list, but it includes (I think) almost everything which bears directly on the issues discussed here. But if we are not to have Berlin's collected essays for some time still, it would be a useful second best if someone would produce a bibliography instead!

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abandon the attempt in favour of a celebration of diversity.

THIS ETHICAL PLURALISM explains two other allegiances—again explicable in a rough and ready fashion as two dichotomies—which are defended in "Two Concepts of Liberty", and even more explicitly in "A Marvellous Decade."

The first is a commitment to the empirical rather than the transcendental self. Negative freedom is a strongly empiricist concept in looking only to the prohibitions addressed to people as they now are. Men's wants, ignorant as they might be, are their wants; their frustration causes misery, and this misery really is a loss and ought to be admitted as such. In the essay on Belinsky in "A Marvellous Decade" there is almost a sigh of relief from Berlin at the point where Belinsky abandons his attempt to see the miseries and horrors of the empirical Russia as mere dross on the surface of the "real" and therefore benign history of Russia. Belinsky became if anything more unhappy after this change of mood; but he could no longer fall into the bad faith of devaluing the sufferings of his contemporaries. And one of Berlin's rare moments of enthusiasm for Jeremy Bentham occurs when he quotes his view that all laws are evil—restricting a man's freedom is an evil, and even if it is an evil which is justified a million times over, it is still a case of doing evil that good may follow.

This emphasis on the empirical self is paralleled by an equal stress on the importance of the present as opposed to the future. It is an interesting feature of Berlin's liberalism that it owes very little to *English* liberalism. The reason, perhaps, is that English liberals were neither tempted nor appalled by the grandiose utopian and historicist schemes of European thinkers. Mill was to some extent an exception, in falling for Comte in a genteel and modest way and then revolting against him. Still, it is not to Mill but to Herzen that Berlin has always looked for the exemplary, present-centred, strongly this-worldly thinker. The great objection to positive libertarians lies in Herzen's famous question: "Do you really wish to condemn human beings alive today to the mere sad role of caryatids supporting a floor for others one day to dance upon?"

The current style in the history of ideas is not very like Berlin's. Quentin Skinner and John Dunn have argued for a much cooler, less present-centred approach, in which the extent of the *differences* between ourselves and our predecessors, and between our problems and their problems, is emphasised. They have backed this up, not just by some persuasive essays on the nature

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of historical explanation, but by some exemplary work on Hobbes and Locke. Both Skinner and Dunn insist on the extent to which the problems of Hobbes or Locke were not ours. Berlin, I think, would always insist that problems of a certain scope at least endure across time, and his technique suggests that contextual cross-purposes are not a danger to be taken too seriously. *Fathers and Children*, for instance, points out that a parallel between Bazarov and the *enragés* of the student left is not exact—he was a revolutionary utilitarian who looked to science for salvation, where they are romantics who are rebelling against the triumphs of science. None the less, the assumption that what appeals to us in Turgenev owes everything to the problems he shares with us is not just made, but insisted on repeatedly.

THE JUSTIFICATION for treating the past in this way is not easy to spell out briefly—or, indeed, at all. But three things may be at any rate gestured at. The first is that we live in an historical culture, in which most activities take place against a backdrop of historical models; to make use of that culture, some access to a usable past is essential. With many of our ideas, it is only by getting some feeling for what has been done with them that they become intelligible at all. In the second place, one might borrow an analogy from the visual arts; there are, of course, art historians who are concerned with the documentation surrounding a painting, or with the technique employed in it, and so on. But the spectator also needs help in order to look at the painting in the first place, to see what's in it. The exact relationship between what we now see and what a contemporary audience might have seen is problematic, but certainly we can be taught to see something without either falsifying or ignoring what a contemporary audience might have seen.

Lastly, it is wholly compatible with an appreciation of Berlin's talent for recreation to insist on the most stringent standards of historical accuracy. To doubt this is to insist too fiercely that *what* a man achieves is the internal accusative of his intentions, and that we can only say what he did when we can also say what he was doing. No doubt his intentions and their context have a certain priority. But the question of what is important in what he did and thought can be constantly re-opened, because we constantly want to start new conversations with the past. Reluctance to exploit the history of ideas in this way is carrying a decent professionalism to puritan extremes.

Deviant Societies

Crime & Punishment Today—By T. R. FYVEL

WHEN A CORONER'S JURY in July found that Stephen Gately, the unfortunate victim in the Red Lion Square demonstration, had met death by misadventure, the Warwick University students' union protested fiercely that this verdict was a piece of whitewash because it did not show that Gately had been killed brutally by the police. Since the Warwick students' union had already made up its mind to this effect before the inquest, its protest was an expected reflex action. Yet it was another illustration of the fact that for a youthful faction of society it is not those who break the law, as in this case the demonstrators who charged with their pointed banners against the police cordon, but those seeking to enforce the law, such as the courts and the police, who are regarded as the enemies of the people's liberties. Not long ago it was only in crime-prone slum areas that the police, as the protectors of the middle class and its property, were looked upon as an enemy. Today, among a considerable section of the young, especially students, and in America among a section of the Blacks, the law with its judges and ceremonial and the police are regarded—often with hatred—as an arm of the Establishment, of the "system", used to hold down the people, the young, the poor and the minorities, and to crush any move towards a fairer society. The corollary is that it is a good thing for the courts and the police to be opposed and fought.

Parallel with this goes another new phenomenon, the apparently passive acceptance by the law-abiding majority of such minority resistance to the law as just one of the less pleasant facts of a new social life. Watched on the television screen, barricaded squatters battling against their eviction, or the sometimes violent struggles of various demonstrators with the police, appear simply as part of television's daily dose of violence, fact and fiction. It was with resignation, to take an extreme example, that the British public watched the resistance of trade unionists to the laws of the Industrial Relations Act, or to the attack by

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hunger-strike of the Price sisters against their imprisonment in England rather than in Ulster. That the Price sisters had participated in organising a bomb attack causing death and injury seemed almost irrelevant, accepted like the daily deadly activity of the IRA. All this illustrates that the forces of law and order have today to operate in a much transformed social context, in effect in a new society. Broadly, those in pursuit of wrong-doing still seek to apply the legal and penal code developed during a stable, authoritarian bourgeois era in a new, materialist and hedonist consumer society, still largely unexplored but into which the bourgeois legal code plainly no longer quite fits.

THE BOURGEOIS CAPITALIST society—under whose culture we lived until yesterday—had arisen out of the French and the Industrial Revolutions. Generalising, one could say that bourgeois society rested upon the authoritarian rule, the social privilege and exclusiveness of the upper-middle class. The working-class majority of the population was economically excluded from the dominant culture; and the whole bourgeois legal system was concerned in good part with the arrangements and the protection of middle-class private property. The bourgeois society died spiritually with the First World War, but its current revolutionary replacement by the consumer society derived probably in any case from its modes of production. Roughly, the consumer society had to come into being when the scientific techniques of mass production had reached such a pitch that the wheels could only be kept turning if, in theory, every citizen, every man, woman or child, is turned into a full consumer, indeed a consumer on an increasing scale to guarantee economic growth. Before the current flood-tide of mass consumption, stimulated by advertisement, the bourgeois society of exclusive upper-middle-class privilege (based on servants!) has simply crumbled, but there is another point to be made about this great changeover.

In the bourgeois society, the upper-middle class successfully identified its authority with that of the state, of Parliament, the Law, the Church, the Armed Forces and industrial employers and, indeed, with the whole force of patriotism; and this identification was generally accepted. For the individual citizen, bourgeois society thus functioned as a kind of super-ego: hence the largely unquestioning acceptance of the authority of the law and the police. In the consumer society, however, these sources of bourgeois authority are rapidly swept aside. Their role as the prop of society as super-ego is being taken over by the hedonist voices of the advertisers, who can, however, never amount to anything but a false

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super-ego, because—whatever their message about life—their true object is just to sell the product. An awareness of this false note in the consumer society in the role of super-ego is today widely prevalent among the people. The consumer society, in short, is not liked; and the question therefore is what will happen to the citizen's respect for its law and police?

THIS WILL DEPEND ON the still uncharted ways in which the consumer society will develop—think of the unexpected arrival of Inflation—for as sociologists such as, say, Ralf Dahrendorf, insist in presenting their models, one can no longer talk of the consumer society in classical capitalist terms. Instead of class war, you have varying divergent interests engaged in perpetual re-adjustment. The lines of such readjustment are still highly confused, which lends significance to attempts to categorise them, like Alain Touraine's *The Post-Industrial Society*.[1] Interestingly, Professor Touraine is a French sociologist, indeed a past President of the French Sociological Association, who has put aside the Marxist outlook which still holds back so many members of the French intellectual Left. His eyes are fixed firmly upon the United States as model for the future of French society. As M. Touraine sees it, the consumer society, French or otherwise, is for him essentially a "programmed society." In it, the mass of citizens are manipulated or programmed by the power structure, *i.e.* by the financial controllers of investment, by managers, technocrats and advertisers, into what Touraine calls "dependent participation" in consumption in the interests of the stability and growth of production. The means of this manipulation are the power structure's control of advertising, of the mass media and entertainments like television, and of the new mass industry of education. For the bulk of the workers, says Touraine, their participation in the general culture of society is no longer centred on their professional work, as it used to be, but on their living standard in "the consumption of items and products produced for the entire society." Instead of the "exploitation of the masses", one had therefore better speak of their alienation, as individuals and groups seek to resist this programming.

Such alienation occurs all the more because the workings of the consumer-society power structure do not make naturally for the best satisfaction of human needs, as by the continued provision of superhighways before housing. Moreover, workers "programmed" to see their participation in society in terms of their living standards as consumers seem also imbued with permanent fears about maintaining this standard. For Professor Touraine, most of the conflicts involving divergent interest groups in the consumer society spring from this fact:

> They predicate opposition between managers driven by the desire to increase production and adapt themselves to the imperatives of power and individuals who act less as workers defending their wages than as persons or groups seeking to maintain their sense of personal life. What these wage-earners/consumers seek is *security*, that is, a predictable and organisable future which will allow them to make plans and count on the fruits of efforts they have willingly made.

It is interesting that Professor Touraine sees much of contemporary delinquency and crime—*i.e.* direct deviance from the norms of the consumer society laid down by its lawmakers—as a symptom of insecurity and alienation. For instance, in surveying the American scene, he sees the members of adolescent street gangs as concerned principally with strengthening their primary social bond of belonging to the group because of their merely marginal involvement in the consumer society, whether through ethnic or educational causes. This deviance, this "social and cultural retreat is often presented as 'criminal'; it is much more often conservative."

OPPOSITION TO ALIENATION in the consumer society has its conservative side, as in much environmental protest. More directly, it is left-wing, concerned with a progressive, more egalitarian alternative to consumer capitalism. Not surprisingly, this alternative is being pushed forward in particular by young academic social scientists; and not surprisingly it includes a proposal for fundamental changes in thinking about society's penal affairs. Classical criminology saw society as run according to a contract of individuals with the state to protect private property and welfare; law and punishment had to be used to deter individuals against actions violating this contract. In bourgeois days, penal thought fell under the spell of positivism. Crime, thought to be concentrated among the "dangerous classes", dangerous that is to private property, was treated as an aberration from those liberal norms which gave a reformist capitalist society its morality; and criminology was hopefully directed towards finding and eliminating the causes of such aberrations. When one looks at current crime and violence in the West, these positivist hopes have hardly been fulfilled, probably with reason. In Britain, however, it is the complaint of young social scientists that even in the changed context of the consumer society, criminology as backed by the Establishment

[1] *The Post-Industrial Society*. By ALAIN TOURAINE. Translated by LEONARD F. X. MAYHEW. Wildwood House, £3.50.

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still rests on the middle-class presupposition of society as based upon a general consensus, *e.g.* about the rights of private property, which, they think, simply cannot be upheld any more. This is the clear message of interesting collective studies like *Deviance and Social Control* and *The New Criminology*.

The keyword for the new criminologists is "deviance"—the acts of deviance of individuals from the alleged norms of the consumer society, which can be described as good or bad, but, even if unlawful, may in the new left-wing view of deviance be right, as resistance against Professor Touraine's "dependent participation."

THE YOUNG BRITISH SOCIOLOGISTS who, influenced from America, are trying to infuse such left-wing ideas into British penal thought, are handicapped, as Stanley Cohen writes in the introductory essay in *Deviance and Social Control*,[2] by the insular, essentially pragmatic character of British criminology. This had always been developed to serve two interests, the administrative interest of making the correctional system more efficient and the humanitarian interest of reforming it. Research was concentrated on practical issues, on studies of recidivism, of broken homes and delinquency, on the incidence of drugtaking and all kinds of follow-up studies of young offenders. The research was carried out by pragmatic and Establishmentarian British institutions like the Home Office Research Unit, the Cambridge Institute under the redoubtable Professor Radzinowicz, the Institute for the Study and Treatment of Delinquency, university departments, the Tavistock Clinic and the Maudsley Hospital. Effective research, according to Professor Radzinowicz, favoured the inter-disciplinary approach, "a psychiatrist, a social psychologist, a penologist, a lawyer and a statistician joining together on a combined research operation." Some indirect effects of such research could be seen in recent British penal reforms such as the abolition of the death penalty, the legalisation of homosexuality, the parole system and open prisons, the transformation of juvenile courts, and so forth.

Well and good: but as Mr Cohen suggests, for left-wing critics, all this research and reform did not touch the basic criminalising aspects of British capitalist consumer society. British mainstream criminology had not even absorbed the ideas of a leading and fashionable American criminologist like David Matza, who maintained that the proper subject of research was not just

[2] *Deviance and Social Control*. Edited by PAUL ROCK and MARY MCINTOSH. Tavistock, £5.

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an act of alleged criminality, but also the social context from which the act sprang and the social outlook and rule-making of those judging and punishing the act. Instead, British criminology still took for granted a consensus about the morality of society, offences against which alone merited research.

YET SUCH A CONSENSUS no longer existed or should exist. To drive home this point, writes Stanley Cohen, a number of young social scientists in 1969 formed a "Sociology of Deviance Group", which soon acquired a considerable number of members, mostly young left-wing academics: books like *Deviance and Social Control* and *The New Criminology* and others are among the results of this move. The aim is to show that the rules of the capitalist consumer society cannot be regarded as static but, on the contrary, as under profound question; and that conventional crimes are only part of a vast movement of acts of deviance against these rules. In his essay on the media in *Deviance and Social Control*, Stuart Hall gives his idea of some such acts of political deviance:

> The types of deviant political activities involved include student militancy and protest (confrontations with university authorities, sit-ins, occupations, etc.); militant extra-parliamentary demonstrations, which might involve conflict with the police; urban rioting and rebellion (e.g. Watts) and urban insurgency (e.g. Ulster); sporadic incidents of bombing, incendiarism, attacks on property for political reasons (Weathermen or "Angry Brigade" activities); squatters' movements, rent strikes, militant tenants' action; ethnically oriented "Black Power" or Panther-like activities.

Without doubt these extra-parliamentary opposition activities have had their effect in speeding changes in the consumer society, as it drifts on without a true super-ego. This lack is a cause of the indifference with which these acts of deviance are often accepted by the majority in society. Again, part of the ethos of the consumer society is the aim of equality of consumption by all, which in the US has greatly assisted the struggle for equality of Black Americans. But all this belongs to the elusive analysis of the consumer society. My doubt is whether any precise subject for study is created by lumping all such diverse oppositional phenomena together under the term "deviance." I have even more doubt whether the study of political deviance can be associated with criminology in the technical sense. The sociologists of deviance will find that in the courts not only the judges, magistrates and police but also the majority of the accused will tend to be culturally conformist and conservative. Indeed, in his essay, Stanley Cohen admits that the strength of mainstream criminology lies in the fact that its research into "conventional" crime is seen to be relevant, whereas the sociologists of deviance "have often opted for the esoteric, the catchy, the hip", in areas like homosexuality, drugtaking and certain kinds of mental illness. Unless the sociologists of deviance concentrate on problems the public sees as relevant, such as the growth of violence, says Cohen, they will remain at a disadvantage.

THE VAGUENESS of the elusive concept of deviance is brought out equally in the long, scrupulously researched, and over-earnest collective study, *The New Criminology*.[3] What the young sociologist authors, Ian Taylor from Sheffield University, Paul Walton from Bradford University and Jock Taylor from Middlesex Polytechnic, are after is really some enormously comprehensive new social theory:

> We have attempted to open out the criminological debate by pointing to certain *formal* and *substantive* requirements of a fully social theory of deviance, a theory that can explain the forms of social control and deviant action in "developed" societies.

As the authors see it, capitalist society today exercises this social control through an army of "experts" engaged in "the necessity to segregate out—in mental hospitals, prisons and juvenile institutions—an increasing number of members of society as being in need of control." To show how this state of affairs came about, Taylor, Walton and Young survey all criminological theories from Beccaria in 1804 to the latest pundits from what might be called a romantic, would-be Marxist viewpoint. There is a little difficulty here in that neither Marx nor Engels ever indicated more than a passing interest in crime as social deviance, seeing it as a phenomenon of working-class demoralisation under capitalism and concentrated in the dangerous and—for the revolution—useless class of the *Lumpenproletariat*. The authors rather bypass this in criticising all extant criminological theories for accepting the rules of capitalist society in drawing up their definitions of deviant crime. Even David Matza is criticised. He is commended for making the point that our consumer society is permeated with "subterranean" values of instant pleasure in leisure time, and that in many juvenile delinquents these "subterranean" values are simply accentuated at the expense of formal work. But Matza comes under the authors' censure for apparently accepting a permanent demoralisation of the "disreputable poor" in an unequal society. The disreputable poor, the demoralised Blacks and Puerto Ricans in the ghettos, even the in-

[3] *The New Criminology*. By IAN TAYLOR, PAUL WALTON and JOCK YOUNG. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.50.

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mates of Attica and other prisons, say the authors, can be organised; they are, in fact, themselves asserting their reputability and rejecting delinquent status. The assertion suggests a romantic belief in an idealist alternative to the consumer society, as is also implicit in the authors' summed-up conclusion:

> For us, as for Marx and for other new criminologists, *deviance* is normal—in the sense that men are now consciously involved (in the prisons that are contemporary society and in the real prisons) in asserting their human diversity. The task is not merely to "penetrate" these problems. . . . The task is to create a society in which the facts of human diversity, whether personal, organic or social, are not subject to the power to criminalize.

But such fine talk of a new society still leaves the link between political opposition to the consumer society and what is officially called crime, like burglary, in effect undefined. One feels that the authors should have begun rather than ended their argument here.

IN FACT, THE EXISTENCE of a stratum of "disreputable" poor alongside affluence remains an acute problem of the consumer society. It is linked with what Sir Keith Joseph has called the Cycle of Deprivation, whereby poor and feckless or drifting parents seem to produce similarly situated offspring. In *Poor Parents*,[4] which he subtitles "Social Policy and the 'Cycle of Deprivation' ", Bill Jordan examines the policy of providing special social services and social security payments to the poorest stratum in the community. His conclusion is that this policy cannot uplift the poor living at the bottom of slum life, because social security payments only help the families to stagger from one crisis to the next, because they are still associated with the Poor Law tradition of imposing a stigma on the recipients, and because of the accompanying pressure on the recipients to find paid work, without leaving them a choice over this. Instead, Mr Jordan proposes a policy of a guaranteed partial income for everyone as by right, which would relieve the poor from having to take up menial paupers' jobs, this to be financed from massive taxation in a different kind of society. There is much in Mr Jordan's strictures, but in the present state of British crisis his proposed remedy seems a non-starter.

There is a slant of middle-class problems in *Young Outsiders*.[5] The word "hippie" seems to be fading out of fashion but it still serves as an overall description of the young people Mr Richard Mills studied, many of middle-class origin, who seek an alternative to consumer life through dropping out, life in communes, through drugs, music, sex and simply drift. Mr Mills found that many of these youngsters came from homes whose tight, orderly expectations they had felt to be too high. He found many of them, too, in severe unhappiness, as over drug-taking. He was struck by the swift decay, the transitory nature of their hopes and goals and the transitoriness of their fashions, too. "Rebels who may one day appear to be raising issues of critical importance may the next seem jaded and irrelevant." None the less, he thinks the hippie phenomenon significant because it reveals how sharply the consumer society divides its members into age-groups, how it causes subcultures to flourish which can impress themselves on the main culture, as in the spread among the young in general of hippie models of dress and hair-styles. Among Mr Mills's proposals—he would like society to treat the hippies better—is one for the provision of "large and anonymous rooming houses" where hippie groups could live for a while before drifting on. Again, the present housing crisis seems hardly propitious for such a scheme.

ONE OF THE GREAT question-marks in the consumer society hangs over the future of the police, now that their tasks have become far more complex and opposition to the consumer society spills over into antagonism towards those charged with guarding its rules. In *Society and the Policeman's Role*,[6] Maureen E. Cain surveys some recent developments in rural and city police work. She deals with the domestic tensions of policemen's lives (the unsocial hours); their dependence upon senior officers (yet informally often withholding bits of information from them); their dependence on colleagues and force solidarity; their minor definitions of their role, *e.g.* breaking the monotony of the beat by booking some "rough" member of the public. The main definitions of the role of the police in enforcing the rules of society, thinks Dr Cain, arise from the regulations of authorities like the Home Office, from the reaction of the community policed and from the workings of the whole police system itself.

Her conclusions are hardly startling, yet her subject-matter provokes some profound questions about the whole future of the police in the consumer society. The police as we know them, after all, were a bourgeois invention. The rules they enforced during the bourgeois era were

[4] *Poor Parents*. By BILL JORDAN. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.50.
[5] *Young Outsiders: A Study of Alternative Communities*. By RICHARD MILLS. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.00.
[6] *Society and the Policeman's Role*. By MAUREEN E. CAIN. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4.95.

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those of solid upper-middle class identified with the state. If British police during this period enjoyed unusual authority, it was because they represented a society sure of its values. Yet now they are the representatives of order in a consumer society in which there is no longer a structure of authority to act as super-ego for the citizen: there seems to be ultimately only the call to consumption. They are the target, often with hatred deliberately whipped up, of licensed opposition groups to the consumer society. They must move and work in a society of quick profits where money and consumption seem raised above all other values. They are often grossly under-manned. Can the British police, now serving a society no longer sure of its bearings, retain the general respect they still have, or must they follow the police of the US and other countries on the road to unpopularity? It is an open question.

Defending the Single Realm

On Ernest Gellner—By KENNETH R. MINOGUE

PHILOSOPHERS OFTEN CONFUSE and irritate outsiders by swinging wildly between two contrasting claims for their subject: that it is overwhelmingly important and, on the other hand, that it is almost totally irrelevant to ordinary life. Socrates and Plato have sometimes been contrasted as standing for philosophical humility and philosophical arrogance, the one wise in the recognition of his own ignorance, the other in confident possession of superior wisdom.

Modern philosophers exhibit the same contrast. John Locke the intellectual underlabourer may be compared with Hegel who considered his own philosophy to be the self-awareness of the world spirit itself. The contrast is sometimes invoked to distinguish Anglo-Saxon from Continental styles of philosophy. The tension between humility and arrogance is part of the reason why, as an academic subject, philosophy is an anarchic realm inhabited by a quarrelsome collection of practitioners who in extreme cases will hardly recognise each other as respectable members of the same profession.

Ernest Gellner, who at a relatively early age has just had published three volumes of his collected writings,[1] is a distinguished and colourful member of this confused scene. Czech by origin and English by intellectual upbringing (a rebellious son of Oxford philosophy), he exhibits clearly the tension between philosophical arrogance and humility. On the Socratic axis, as it were, he has a brisk, no-nonsense view of philosophical argument, and an evident impatience with metaphysical ineffabilities. He clearly regards philosophy not as an optional indulgence for the speculatively gifted, but as a necessity of thought which reality imposes upon anyone who lifts his head above the marketplace, or even wants to understand the marketplace better. There is no fundamental distinction between the quarrels of the marketplace and the abstract disputations of the ivory tower. But for this very reason there appears in his work an axis of Platonic rationalism by which the outcome of philosophical battles determines what ordinary men must sensibly believe and what they may legitimately desire. Philosophy, as Gellner practises it, is not conceptual underlabouring, nor is it coterie illumination. It is thought with its sleeves rolled up putting its shoulder to the wheel of mankind's common endeavours.

Gellner is a generaliser rather than a distinguisher. Other philosophers demarcate areas of inquiry and levels of abstraction which become relatively independent baronies of the mind; what Gellner sees, by contrast, is a single realm of interconnections. He does not exempt the philosopher busy with his conceptual clarification from involvement in this realm. "Philosophy is essentially about *Weltanschauung*. In general, the so-called technical, specific problems are easily soluble, and not worth solving. . . ." Similarly, Gellner sees the modern world not as a plurality of separate endeavours but as constituted by involvement in the single process of industrialisation:

> In the twentieth century, the essence of man is not that he is a rational, or a political, or a sinful, or a thinking animal, but that he is an industrial animal.

Given his view that philosophy is orientation, it is clear that philosophers who don't come to terms with this new essentiality are like children

[1] *Cause and Meaning in the Social Sciences. Contemporary Thought and Politics. The Devil in Modern Philosophy.* By ERNEST GELLNER. Edited by I. C. JARVIE and JOSEPH AGASSI. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £3.25, £3.95, £4.95.

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who think they can't be seen because they have their eyes shut.

THE VERY FIRST PIECE reprinted in the specifically philosophical volume of papers, and the one from which that volume takes its title, is a short *jeu d'esprit* called "The Devil in Modern Philosophy." It reveals as much of Gellner as of its explicit subject. "Modern philosophy, from Descartes onwards and including the present generation of philosophers," it begins, "can be *defined* as belief in the devil", and the Gellnerian italics of that "*defined*" is the author thumbing his nose at anyone who thinks that this apparent flippancy is not a proper definition. His point is that all modern philosophers are in one way or another entangled with Descartes' *malin génie*, whose pleasure it was to involve mankind in a fog of error. The devil manifested himself, of course, in many forms. His work might be detected in the misrepresentations of our own minds, or in the distortions of historical conditioning. In more recent times, anything from the Unconscious to linguistic confusion might indicate his influence.

THE IDEA OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY as an exercise in what he calls comparative diabolics is, of course, no more than a conceit seated atop a banality, but it does reveal Gellner's own view of 20th-century philosophy. For his mighty philosophical broadsword has from the very beginning been devoted to combating the diabolical errors of linguistic analysis as promoted by Wittgenstein and supported by men like G. E. Moore and J. L. Austin. As Gellner tells the story (and he tells it in different versions in many of the pieces printed here), linguistic analysts have trivialised philosophy by explaining philosophical problems as mere perversions of language. Such problems, according to this particular devilish fashion, were generated by removing some suggestive abstraction (such as freedom, or truth, or knowledge) from its ordinary linguistic context and setting it down in unfamiliar surroundings, thus creating puzzles whose solution, indeed whose cure (for Wittgenstein appears to have treated philosophical perplexity as a kind of disease), consists in restoring the term to its natural linguistic habitat.

Exorcism of this diabolism was the theme of Gellner's first book, *Words and Things* (1959) which received the accolade of not being reviewed in *Mind*, the nearest a philosopher can get to being banned in Boston. It established him as a formidable and slightly scandalous figure on the British philosophical scene. It is the basis of Gellner's legend, which is somewhat crudely presented in the preface by his editors.

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> was boring. Not only was it boring—indeed it made a virtue of being boring—it was pointless. Not only was it pointless—indeed it made a virtue of being pointless—it was self-serving. It even made a virtue of being self-serving.

As Gellner himself remarks in another place, legends do not have to be false. What they do is to serve as a convenient backcloth to present activities. And the activity which engages Gellner is what his editors call "the basic philosophical quests of man." Philosophy resembles life in at least one respect: it periodically opens up opportunities for someone to make a stir by boldly affirming an apparently ignored truism. G. E. Moore on a famous occasion did this by holding up his hand and affirming the reality of the external world. In a rather similar way, the cultural context of the 20th century has allowed Gellner something of the same effect by affirming that philosophical problems *are* real. Few things infuriate him like the aphorism that philosophy leaves everything as it is. Those theorists who imagine that their elucidation of concepts has no effect on the struggles of the world at large are fooling themselves; they are in fact elaborating *Weltanschauungen*. "I do not distinguish between 'analyses' of ethical concepts and the actual commendations of given values", he wrote in *Thought and Change* (1964), ". . . a distinction, much favoured by recent philosophers, which [he adds with masterly simplicity] is untenable."

WHEN GELLNER FITS things together, then, he tends to construct a single realm of transitive interconnections. To sustain this type of single realm is, as we shall see, the dominant thread that runs through his writings. Whatever threatens this single realm of practical interconnections is described as "idealism", and although his enmity to linguistic analysis is the dominant trauma of his thought, enmity to idealism (of which he takes linguistic analysis to be merely a special case) is the fundamental mainspring. The distinctiveness of Gellner's thought is a compound of this passionate conviction, and the highly individual manner of its expression.

Gellner is a brisk, impatient philosopher whose readers find themselves hurled into the whizz-bang of argument with the minimum of expository build-up. His most characteristic device is the word "roughly" to qualify his statement of a position he is about to attack. This is a useful piece of insurance against the pedantic quibbler who might delay the argument by protesting that the opposing position has not been fairly stated. Once the object of attack has thus been hastily set up, he moves in with demolition devices like dilemmas, arguments from regress and charges of implicit self-refutation, all of which he uses with quite masterly skill.

The effect of his arguments is epistemologically egalitarian, and this combination of a political and a philosophical term is typical of Gellner's own style of thought. He tends to organise a whole range of familiar philosophical arguments under the idea of "privilege." This legal and political term has, of course, had something of a vogue in recent philosophical writing. When philosophers have cast around for a way of describing what is unsatisfactory about introspection as a method of psychological inquiry, they have come up with an attack upon "privileged access" to the mind. Gellner has extended this terminology. He has used the expression "privileged access to our own societies" to bring out his criticism of the doctrine that human actions should be understood in terms of meanings rather than causes. Of the various ways in which explanation in terms of origins may be criticised, Gellner has chosen to treat it as the postulation of "privileged moments." The resonant idea of "privilege" in Gellner's work reflects his resistance to any attempt to set up separate realms which can only be estimated and criticised in special ways. To allow this would be to recognise the collapse of his own single realm of understanding. When not using the idea of privilege, Gellner sometimes employs the image of "redoubts" where certain general ideas (such as God, or moral responsibility, or witches) will be insulated from the danger of getting their just deserts at the hands of scientific inquiry and philosophical criticism. Privileged realms and redoubts are part of the machinery of idealism, and it will already be clear that the charge of idealism is an attack on the milksops and pantywaists who (Gellner thinks) won't come out and fight. His philosophical personality is sometimes that of the tough corner kid breaking up the vicarage tea party constituted by those philosophers whose main concern, he tells us, is to teach us our "conceptual table manners."

GELLNER'S ATTACK on what he calls idealism has been particularly prominent in his work on the social sciences, and especially in his concern with his second profession of social anthropology. He has spent many years studying the Berbers of the Atlas Mountains in Morocco, and is well steeped in anthropological lore. In this area, he is a discriminating functionalist. But he is not entirely persuaded that the crime of ethnocentricity as currently understood in the profession has been properly construed. Anthropologists these days regard themselves as the sophisticated descendants of men who began the

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study of other cultures by identifying many tribal institutions and beliefs as essentially defective, as exhibiting, indeed, what Lévy-Bruhl described as a "pre-logical mentality." The reform has consisted in locating primitive beliefs and institutions within their contexts in such a way as to elicit the rationality which may be hidden from the casual Western eye. One implication of this reform is the view that the anthropologist as such has no business deciding upon the truth or goodness of what he is studying. Gellner criticises this implication as the unwarrantable exercise of what he calls "conceptual charity." His general argument is that this version of functionalism leads anthropologists to imagine that their studies have demonstrated the rationality of social institutions and beliefs, whereas in fact this is a methodological assumption from which they began. One unfortunate consequence of this *petitio principi* is that students of culture are incapacitated from recognising the absurdities and ambiguities which in fact play an important part in many cultures. Such things have been explained away at the very beginning.

So far, so good. But Gellner's passion to sustain his single critical realm takes him beyond this criticism to the position that anthropologists necessarily must make judgments about the truth or goodness of what they are studying. His argument is that such a judgment is necessarily implied by the very fact that an anthropologist chooses a particular belief (for example, witchcraft) from among the many possible candidates, as the thing requiring explanation in functional terms. The point here, however, is that the reasons which provoke the interest of an anthropologist may be very various indeed. Falsity may indeed provoke his attention, but so also may eccentricity or oddness. It may even be that an anthropologist is surprised at what he thinks is a true belief held by his tribe. But these reasons for interest are logically quite separable from the anthropological explanation of them. Nor need the anthropologist be held accountable if these judgments which lead him to select a particular candidate for explanation should turn out to be unsound. Gellner, however, *knows* that such beliefs as witchcraft are nonsense, and seeks characteristically to link such judgments to social explanations.

GELLNER'S SINGLE REALM is fundamentally materialist in that he wishes to emphasise that the actual physical conditions of life limit the range of possible human choices. He does not deny that social structures are in some measure human constructions and that their details cannot be deduced from physical, biological and other such considerations. Nevertheless, idealism as he

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criticises it consists in playing down the physical constraints in favour of the moral, political and social contingencies. Indeed, one of the reasons why his primary bent is sociological rather than political is that societies appear to be better candidates for natural, law-governed explanations than states are. He criticises Peter Winch and Alasdair MacIntyre as

> Idealists in the simple and crucial sense that (a) they offer us guarantees that the stuff of human and social life is made of thoughts, and (b) they offer us painless and uncheckable avenues towards alleged knowledge. The only thing which is new about this Idealism, which gives it an appearance of freshness, camouflages it and helps protect it from obvious criticisms, is that it uses the newish idiom of semantic philosophy.

The words with punch in this passage are "painless", "uncheckable" and "guarantees." They exhibit Gellner's view that idealists, and especially linguistic analysts, constitute societies for the prevention of cruelty to concepts. Broken-winged concepts should be denied the charity of cosy contextual homes and left to expire from their own evident inadequacy or the purging criticism of philosophy.

AS THESE VIEWS would suggest, Gellner is grandson of the Enlightenment, one who seeks to open up all spheres to the light of rational discussion. He prefers science to common sense, and common sense to flights of the imagination. *The Devil in Modern Philosophy* contains a long section dealing with French 18th-century materialism, particularly with d'Holbach's *System of Nature*. He appears to recognise this particular crusader against theological superstition as an ancestor. The Idealists he criticises feature in this context as the descendants of those who in earlier times prevented men from coming to terms with reality by persuading them of mysteries like the Trinity or absurdities like transubstantiation. Gellner's antipathy to splitting up what he considers to be the single realm of human understanding is explained by his conviction that such splits help to protect absurdities of this very kind.

Within the confines of his single realm, however, Gellner is a charitable and tolerant host. The aggressive acerbities of his Enlightenment ancestors have rubbed off, and while he is merciless to attempts to escape from the realm, he is prepared within it to recognise all manner of difficulties and ambiguities. It is clear, indeed, that on Gellner's rules for acceptance of knowledge, very many of the things that men are most eager to know must remain beyond the reach of our comprehension. He is a typical 20th-century thinker in that he has no difficulty in living with the necessity of agnosticism over a wide field of human interest. He is content with Locke's candle of the Lord, without Locke's need for supplementary revelation. He has little patience with those whose temperamental inclinations are different.

One of the most ruthless, as well as one of the funniest pieces in *The Devil in Modern Philosophy* is called "The Belief Machine" and is a review of Alasdair MacIntyre's collection of essays called *Against the Self Images of the Age*. It exhibits not so much a clash of arguments as a clash of temperaments. MacIntyre has been at various stages a Christian, a Marxist and a Wittgensteinian. "Well, to lose one faith could happen to anyone", Gellner comments tartly, "To lose so many looks like carelessness." And he goes on to castigate "ideological fidgetiness" and "spiritual omnivorousness."

When discussing Malinowski's suggestion that "traditional religion is a necessary barrier to social disaster" he comments that it is a pragmatism close to the cynicism of Plato's "noble lie." That Gellner should so fashionably treat Plato's "noble lie" as cynicism derives directly from his view that whereof we cannot know, thereof we must be agnostic. Plato's view of religion is, of course, the fount of the "arrogant" philosophical view that religion is philosophy translated into simple images for the dialectically short-winded. There is much to be said against this view, but to call it "cynicism" is to suggest the Enlightenment view (which goes back much further) that religious beliefs are deliberate lies by which the rulers keep the ruled enslaved. Again, Gellner treats the cry of "Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief" not as a spiritual difficulty but as an absurd logical dilemma. His rationalism makes him unyieldingly hostile even to the notion of religions as the imaginative coordinates societies evolve out of their moral and social convictions. Belief, in Gellner's thought, is on the short leash of evidence, and "believer" is one of the most abusive terms in his vocabulary.

GELLNER'S VIEW OF REALITY, as I have so far described it, would seem to present a simple positivist picture of a world of facts objectively accessible to inquiry, combined with human evaluations which create non-factual propositions but which are none the less fundamentally part of the same world. Gellner does indeed accept the distinction between facts and values (as, in at least a simple logical sense, by God he'd better) but he is clearly uneasy about it.

Ten years ago, in *Thought and Change*, he was asserting the full battery of arguments,

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then fashionable and now tedious, to the effect that one cannot do anything, from scratching one's toe to asserting that the cat is on the mat, without implying values. The very language of assertion was said to be swarming with these omnipresent microbes. In receiving this doctrine, Gellner appears not to have had any particular axe to grind. Indeed, unlike many modern undergraduates, whose first lisping lesson in pseudo-profundity this doctrine is, he does not even have any axe to blunt. Certainly he would be the last man to try and demonstrate that even the "vaunted objectivity" of scientific and other forms of academic inquiry is just as tainted with values as the scruffiest bit of ideology to be picked up off the street. This makes his espousal of the doctrine all the more puzzling, since if it is pressed with sufficient vigour, it leads directly to that very idealism he so much detests.

For if *everything* is evaluative, is not criticism merely the friction of one value rubbing up against another? The form in which he recognises this as a problem for his single realm of inquiry is as the problem of "relativism" and his solution to it is not entirely clear. What is clear is that he regards the whole point of philosophy as the achievement of what he calls "criteria for correct belief." By a criterion, he means a passport officer stationed on the very frontiers of his single realm, examining the credentials of what is to be admitted. It is by hiring philosophical abstractions for this criteriological work that he manages to integrate them into his single realm and save them from their supposed remoteness and irrelevance. But since (*pace* Gellner) philosophical discussions seldom *are* directly relevant to practical issues, he is favourably disposed to the omnipresence of values in order to maintain the internal lines of communication within his realm.

VALUES ARE, OF COURSE, omnipresent in the simple and trivial sense that all human activity has an irreducible practical aspect. But this practical aspect of academic propositions is totally irrelevant to their truth. Whether such-and-such a proposition is true or not is unaffected either by the values which may be involved in my asserting it, or even by the values which were involved in the construction of the terms in which I formulate it. This is true even of the endless disputabilities of philosophy; even indeed in political philosophy, which is presumably the area most vulnerable to erosion by the sniffing out of implicit values. A properly philosophical argument is not evaluative, and to discover values implied in it is to exhibit a defect. From the philosophies of people like Hobbes and Hegel, no political values at all may be *implied*. That the contrary is

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often asserted testifies merely to the looseness with which the term "implication" is used these days. That one or other political cause may seek support in these writings results simply from the fact that they have effects in the practical world. But the appeals come from the most varied parties, and the effects are of the most diverse kind. Nor is this diversity surprising, for what is appealed to in practical political argument has long since been ripped from its proper philosophical context and misunderstood in order to be conveniently used. But to say this is to assert that philosophy and practice are, so far as mutual implication is concerned, two separate worlds; and such a view denies Gellner's single, simple realm of concepts rubbing promiscuously up against one another.

The strongest component of Gellner's single realm is, of course, scientific understanding, with whose "cognitive power" Gellner is greatly impressed. His notion of science is broad and all-inclusive. Little is immune from it. Thus the political philosophy of Hobbes is said to have been refuted by modern contacts with tribes, a view that would turn the unfortunate Hobbes into a stumbling conjectural proto-anthropologist, which he was not. No field of inquiry is allowed to be an island, entire of itself.

As one might expect, this makes the incorporation of history something of a problem.

HISTORY CONCERNS Gellner primarily in two ways. One of these is his understandably sceptical reaction to the claim that the present must be understood in terms of the past. He is very wary of the genetic fallacy, describing it, as we have seen, as a species of intellectually vicious privilege. To understand authoritarian tendencies in Britain, he suggests, we should as usefully look to the experience of other industrial societies as to the practices of the Stuarts, Cromwell and George III. But this wariness is as much temperamental as philosophical. It is plausible to suggest that Gellner cannot quite take the past seriously: it must be turned into some kind of structure before he apprehends it. His only real excursion into history in these three volumes is his treatment of d'Holbach, and that is relentlessly, indeed raggedly, analytical. The only element of historical context considered is a textbook account of *philosophe* hostility to the Roman Catholic Church, and d'Holbach is grasped in terms of label-shuffling (anti-clericalism, materialism, determinism etc.). Again, discussing Michael Oakeshott's concern with traditions, Gellner can recognise nothing explanatory. He turns it into a foolish prescription that we should abide by "conventional wisdom." The very idea of a tradition slips through his fingers.

THE SITUATION IS SIMILAR when Gellner turns to consider the actual character of historical explanation, by contrast with the uses to which it may be put. A series, he several times remarks, explains nothing, and he seeks therefore for the structural connections which are required to turn a series into what he can recognise as the real red meat of explanation. The solution he arrives at (which he calls a "moderate materialism") is not as crudely positivist as that of the front-runner in this field, namely the "covering law model" suggested by Carl Hempel. Gellner does not believe that the only legitimate connection between event *A* and event *B* is a "covering law" from which event *B* may be deduced. His candidate for a connective is a sociological "rule" which explains the structure of constraints within which human beings necessarily operate. He is cautious and moderate in his use of this device, for he is aware that physical conditions never impose a unique solution to the problems of human behaviour. None the less,

> The nexus between an act and its consequences, or between the failure to perform it and another set of consequences, is dictated not by nature, but is *somehow* the consequence of a given social structure.

The "somehow" which I have italicised here is Gellner's act of faith, and faith it has to be because he is perfectly aware of the difficulties. In discussing the question of how we are to explain "those peculiarly pointless buttons which are found at the end of the sleeve on male coats in our society" Gellner recognises (in the context, significantly enough, of a discussion of functionalism) that a generalisation in terms of the conspicuousness of social stratification will only explain what he calls "the formal aspects" of the problem. The functionalist explanation may tell us a little about the general class of pointless ornaments but cannot explain why it is *buttons* rather than any of the many other possible adornments, that have met the problem. The functionalist account, then, does not explain the problem that was posed.

Yet, as Gellner says, social anthropologists are suspicious of the idea that individuals invent things; they are only happy when burrowing into a structure. Gellner does, then, have an evident sympathy for historical explanation, but in the end, his philosophy pulls him back to his general rules. The reason for the pull is explained in the form of a dilemma:

> There is no alternative to using [rules]. The alternative is not some brave tough-minded history, a pure unadorned narrative of "what really happened", but only a childish narrative which takes the nexus between events for granted.

There is something slightly despairing about

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the abusive "childish" in that last sentence, for Gellner knows perfectly well that his rules won't do the job. One may suggest that his problem arises because he takes events to be hard, clear, self-contained and unambiguous. It is only on this assumption that the problem has to be posed in terms of how they must be "glued" together. Gellner's single realm has no room for the essential ambiguities which the Greeks studied as rhetoric. He is partly aware of this difficulty, and has given a generous welcome to Professor Gallie's idea of "essentially contested concepts." He does not, however, extend this idea to the sphere of events, for they are too close to facts, and to do so would be to open him up to the dreaded idealism.

But when (to take an example from one of the earliest historians) the Corinthians address the Spartans and tell them that the Athenians "are asking you not so much for alliance as for complicity in their crime", where are we to find the essential event on which descriptions like "alliance" or "complicity in crime" have been superimposed? Gellner needs to be able to scrape away these descriptions so that a clear and unambiguous fact may be incorporated in some structure. But at this point one may turn his own terminology against him: what he is trying to postulate is a *privileged* description of events, and all the common-sense materialism in the world won't yield it.

IT IS WORTH OBSERVING, in any case, that the "rules" Gellner suggests are a long way from having the "cognitive power" of science. When he actually does explain some real case, his own explanations are indeed structural, but they remain explanatorily feeble precisely because of their historical poverty. Faced with the mountain of rather pointless empirical research produced by American social scientists in the 1950s, he has recourse to a structural connection between the bureaucratic management of Foundations and the biddability of grant-receiving academics. But however suggestive this may be, it is not remotely a law-like connection, and remains a speculative superimposition upon the problem he is concerned with.

Gellner is a vigorous and salutory gadfly who, like that earlier gadfly, inclines to the humble view of philosophy. He believes that its value lies in keeping our conceptual nets in good repair, while scientists go out and get the fish. His strictures on the situation of humanist intellectuals in the transitional stage of industrialism which has left them without a skill to practise are humbling and salutary—but only salutary so long as they are not taken as *ad hominem* refutations of what philosophers less impressed than he is by the 20th century have to say.

Ritual & Rationality

Anthropologists on Myth—By LUCY MAIR

TWENTY YEARS AGO Claude Lévi-Strauss complained that anthropologists were leaving the field of religion to be occupied by amateurs. Nearly twenty years before that, E. E. Evans-Pritchard had published, as his first book, a massive study of Zande beliefs and practices relating to witchcraft, oracles and magic, and it is appropriate that, of several collections of essays made in his honour, two should be concerned with the aspects of his work that bring him closest to Lévi-Strauss.

Nobody could say today that anthropologists neglect the study of "the savage mind" and its products. Indeed, in France Robert Jaulin fulminates against "*les ethnologues qui méprisent l'acte quotidien.*" In Britain, with its tradition of prolonged and close observation of everyday life, it is harder, though not impossible, to find mental constructs treated in isolation from social activities. One can generally take on trust that a British anthropologist is aware of this context even where he does not expressly mention it.

A leading topic of current discussion is the degree of rationality to be accorded to accounts of the cosmos and man's place in it which postulate the existence of unobservable personalised beings and inexplicable forces, and which tell fantastic tales of miraculous happenings in the first days of the world (in vulgar language, religion and mythology); a subsidiary theme is the relation of myth to ritual.

The question whether there are differences in modes of thinking so wide as to make communication between members of different societies impossible is one of those discussed in *Modes of Thought.* Nobody really supposes so, but Evans-Pritchard, with his interest in social systems as symbolic systems, drew attention to the dangers in taking for granted the equivalence of roughly similar concepts in different languages.

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No doubt this is why T. O. Beidelman has given the title *The Translation of Culture* to the volume that he has edited,[1] though little of its content is devoted to this problem. It does, however, contain an essay by Lévi-Strauss in which he contrasts the myths and ritual of two neighbouring Sioux tribes, the Mandan and Hidatsa. In accordance with his theory of a universal human tendency to see the world of experience as a set of binary oppositions, he argues that these two peoples have systematically drawn from a common mythical heritage themes which set them in a relationship of inverse symmetry. The contrasts in myths, he here says categorically, are the source of the contrasts between the seasonal rituals of the two tribes; they are the myths which "found" the ritual.

MANY MYTHS ARE RECITED on ritual occasions or are cited in justification of the acts done on these occasions. Edmund Leach once went so far as to say that myth and ritual are inseparable; one does in words what the other does in action. But this is not true of all myths. It depends, of course, on what you mean by a myth. A description of the characteristics of a myth that might satisfy anthropologists is that it relates events of a kind supposed to have been possible only in the high and far-off days, through which some existing state of affairs is explained or justified. They are just-so stories, in fact, but they have a sacred character that differentiates them from fairy-tales. No culture is without stories of this kind, and if anthropologists offend anyone by saying that only these are myths, we should be entitled to give them some other name—Xx, or what you will.

G. S. Kirk, however, disclaims definition, as he rejects theories which ascribe a single function to all myths.[2] Yet he evidently knows what a myth is. Sumerian myths belong to "a true mythical tradition"; this is demonstrated by their content, which suggests neither independent literary creation nor a systematic theology. The Epic of Gilgamesh has "an unmistakable aura of the mythical, of that kind of emotional exploration of the permanent meaning of life" that is not found, he says, in much of Greek mythology. Can it be that he is himself the victim of undiscriminating popular usage? He distinguishes myth from legend, the latter being based on some memory, however distorted, of actual events; and from folklore, which is primarily of narrative interest, does not deal with matters of grave preoccupation, and tends to have fewer supernatural elements. Though he judges Lévi-Strauss to be the only writer with anything interesting to say on the subject, he is far from accepting him uncritically. He rejects the assertion that a myth consists of all its variants; before it is reduced to writing, it may have an infinite number of variants, some due simply to a whim of the teller. Nor will he accept the basic assumption of the binary structure of human thought on which depends Lévi-Strauss's theory that myths deal with contradictions; he thinks the Amerindians are a special case, though he treats Hesiod in a Lévi-Straussian manner. But he is impressed, as we all must be, by the emphasis on myth as stating and bridging the opposition between nature and culture.

In the end we find that a story which is "infected by rational statement and logical ordering" does not count as a myth. But this is not to say that Mr Kirk accepts Cassirer's idea of myth as an expression of an intuitive rather than analytical view of the world. This theory he holds to have been exploded by *La Pensée Sauvage*. By no means everywhere, however; it is invoked by Peter Munz[3] in support of his argument that myths are the product, not of speculation, but of states of consciousness that cannot be expressed directly but only through metaphors; each successive version of a myth (and this includes literary treatment) makes the description of a vague feeling more specific. J. S. Dunne, author theologian, draws all his myths from literary sources, and associates them with the sacredness of cities and kings on the one hand and man's confrontation with mortality on the other.[4] He presents Homer as a sort of proto-Tolstoy musing on the futility of war.

VICTOR TURNER'S MYTHS "transcend the contradictions and conflicts inherent in the mundane social system",[5] but not in a Lévi-Straussian cognitive sense. On the contrary, they go with the condition of "liminality" which forms a phase in rituals surrounding changes of status, the phase in which the initiand has cast off his former condition but not yet entered on his new one. In such rituals he characteristically loses his personal identity, and is indistinguishable in status from his fellows, with whom he develops a comradeship of equals; he is in a condition which Turner calls communitas. He sees communitas as a rejection of the order and hierarchy that are inseparable from the conduct of everyday life; not as an ideal to be permanently pursued as an

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[1] *The Translation of Culture*. Edited by T. O. BEIDELMAN. Tavistock Publications, paper £2.50.

[2] *Myth*. By G. S. KIRK. Cambridge University Press. £3.25, paper £1.65.

[3] *When the Golden Bough Breaks*. By PETER MUNZ. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £2.25.

[4] *The City of the Gods*. By JOHN S. DUNNE. Sheldon Press £4.50, paper £1.95.

[5] *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors*. By VICTOR TURNER. Cornell University Press, $16.50, £8.25.

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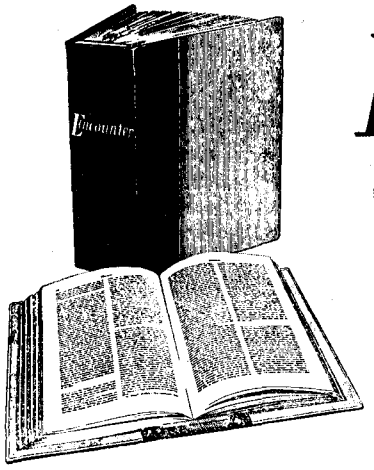
alternative, but as a condition that it is good for society to experience from time to time. It is from the relaxation of structural inhibitions that socially creative impulses are born. His illustrations include a study of pilgrimages; he quotes some striking accounts—one by Malcolm X—of the feeling of brotherhood that they engender.

Turner bases on his observations in a tiny village in Zambia the theory that overt social conflict takes what he calls the "processional" form of a drama; in other words, it falls into clearly recognisable phases. A social norm is flouted; in fact the norm in question is that of obedience to constituted authority. This creates a situation of crisis, which either does or does not restore harmony; if it does not, there is a schism. As it happened, in his Zambian village the two factions, though they did not reunite, eventually joined in a ritual of reconciliation which restored communitas (the word here apparently meaning no more than good will). This elaborate scheme hardly does more than spell out what Radcliffe-Brown said in one short paragraph: that the reaction of society to a breach of norms is a move to restore equilibrium, but that equilibrium may be reached at a new level—that is by a change in social relationships. Curiously enough, this is the statement most frequently cited to demonstrate that Radcliffe-Brown's theories could not account for social change.

THE BATTLE FOR the rationality of the "savage mind", for the argument that its cosmologies are created by the same thought-processes as the theories of modern science, is fought by a number of contributors to *Modes of Thought*.[6] Although there is one (partial) dissentient, the usual stage army of opponents among positivist anthropologists who make verifiability their criterion is not represented. The leading exponent of the view that there is no essential difference in modes of thought is Robin Horton, who as one of the editors of the book is entitled to a lion's share of space. His argument has the support of such philosophers as Steven Lukes and (with reservations) Ernest Gellner.

Horton takes his point of departure from the neglected short passage in Durkheim's *Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* in which the master asserts that the germ of scientific thought came into being with the appearance of religion,

[6] *Modes of Thought*. Edited by ROBIN HORTON and RUTH FINNEGAN. Faber, £8.50.



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in fact with just the kind of identification of apparently distinct objects that Lévy-Bruhl would have called "pre-logical." It was through religious belief that man realised that the material world could not be apprehended solely through sense data; the idea that a clan and its totemic emblem somehow partook of the same essence was the first step. Both religious and scientific thinking seek "to translate the realities of direct observation into an intelligible language." Thus, where Lévy-Bruhl saw a rejection of "mystical" thought with the coming of science, Durkheim finds an evolutionary process. Modern authorities in different fields also deny any discontinuity.

Horton maintains that we have been misled by a positivist model of scientific procedures that is nothing like what scientists actually do. They reason by analogy just as pre-scientific man does; they have their own kind of unobservables which cannot be seen by the naked eye. They have penetrated far further into "natural causes" than their unscientific predecessors, but not by being more rational than they were. It is a fallacy to describe beliefs as irrational simply because their truth is not capable of demonstration, or even when they are demonstrably false. He cites *Witchcraft among the Azande* and the work of Evans-Pritchard's pupils on religion, and asserts that anyone who came to these books without prejudice must conclude that the entities he is reading about are simply "theoretical concepts couched in a slightly unfamiliar idiom." The difference between "religion" and "science" does not rest on verifiability; as Sir Karl Popper has said, it is the difference between openness to alternative explanations and its opposite. It was competing idea-systems, says Horton, that led to the scientific revolution of the 19th century.

Ernest Gellner remarks that there have been plenty of alternative doctrines available to "traditional" societies, as John Beattie said earlier, referring to the various versions of Christianity that have been offered to West Africa for several centuries. As for the type of thinking that is recognised to be scientific, both he and Barry Barnes invoke Thomas Kuhn's theory of the dominance over it of paradigms—received ideas which limit the possibilities of critical thinking.

ROBIN HORTON draws a further argument for the continuity of religious and scientific thinking from psychological studies which find that causal connections can be directly perceived only under strictly limited conditions. Finally he asks *why* we have all been so eager to ascribe the empirical inadequacies of pre-scientific world-views to a different *kind* of thinking, and answers in terms of the contemporary bias of western thought. We are anxious, and rightly so, not to claim the superiority over "lesser breeds" in which our grandparents were so confident, but we secretly feel, he suggests, that scientific thinking—not simply the application of its results—*is* something in which we are superior. Others have been led by their disillusionment with the industrial society that scientific knowledge has created—allied of course to a human self-seeking that is universal—to reject rationality altogether. For them the pre-scientific cultures represent the world we have lost, a world in which feeling is not subordinated to reason, in which symbols "say" the unsayable, and their supposed irrationality is a ground of superiority.

The dissentient voice is that of S. J. Tambiah, who holds that, although both magical and scientific thought are analogical, the use of analogy in the two activities is so different as to makes them incommensurable. He argues on just the lines that Horton ascribes to the romanticising Westerner: that if we regard magic as the linear precursor of science, we are driven to consider it, and its practitioners, inferior. And while he recognises that Western scientific thought has developed out of magical practices, he suggests that this need not necessarily be a universal process of evolution.

There is less debatable ground in the other aspect of traditional cultures dealt with in *Modes of Thought*, the deliberate products of the imagination that are called literature where they have been preserved in writing. This is the province of the other editor, Ruth Finnegan. This too is a field which Evans-Pritchard explored long before his contemporaries. Their interest was concentrated on *l'acte quotidien*, though it is absurd to say that they were only concerned with what contributed to the harmonious working of society. Ruth Finnegan shows how the absence of writing does not entail the absence of strict form or of criteria of style. One of her examples is the Somali alliterative poem, which requires the repetition of the same initial sound twice in every line in a composition of perhaps a hundred lines. She shows that oral literature is certainly not "communally" produced but springs from the imagination of individuals, and that there is all the more room for creativity in recounting and reciting tales just because they are not fixed in writing.

MICHAEL GILSENAN'S STUDY of a Sufi brotherhood in Egypt[7] brings us back to *l'acte quotidien*—how a religious order is created and maintained, and, in this particular case, can flourish while

[7] *Saint and Sufi in Modern Egypt*. By MICHAEL GILSENAN. Oxford University Press, £4.75.

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others are declining. His distinction between organisation and association has something in common with Turner's between structure and communitas. Organisation is hierarchical, association loosely structured and egalitarian. An order which exists to put into practice the Muslim principle of brotherhood and fellowship, as all the Sufi Orders do, can with difficulty accept the hierarchy that is necessary to keep in being a congregation of thousands of people spread over long distances. One of the strengths of the *Hamidiya Shadhiliya* is that it is open to the humble and ill-educated whom other Orders would reject; but the other is its rather tight organisation. This is officially justified in terms of the leader's need for helpers in his work. Within forty years of its foundation, appointments to positions of authority had ceased to be hereditary and came to depend on efficiency, including success in proselytising; and since efficiency in modern conditions requires literacy, office-holders are likely to come from the higher social strata. All appointments and promotions are made by the leader alone, and he takes little account of locally based statuses; hence from top to bottom of the order only his authority is recognised. At the same time the screen of officials between him and the rank and file does something to preserve the saintly image of a leader who is the son of the wonder-working founder, and cannot have the charisma that his father had.

Control from the centre is exercised largely in the guise of friendly visiting, a principle of brotherhood laid down by the founder. When a new branch is established, members of neighbouring ones visit it, join in ritual and are then entertained at the house of one of the members. Inspections on the basis of which reports are sent to headquarters also take the form of friendly visits.

Perhaps bureaucratic rationalisation may prove to be the only means of survival when the time comes for the founder's son to be succeeded by someone yet further from the original source of grace. Salama, the founder, was a minor official, and evidently learned from his employment the organisational value of hierarchy as well as the advantages of modern means of communication.

In Muslim ritual Gilsenan sees a type that is not comprehended in the categories set up by students of localised "primitive" religions. He calls it *liturgical*, and interprets it as an assertion of a Muslim identity that transcends political or ethnic units. This is true above all in the *dhikr*, the ritual performed by the Orders, which has "no reference in its intention to the social world." It is looked on with suspicion by the scholar-jurists who are the official guardians of Islam. Hence "ecstatic" behaviour is frowned on and repressed, and communitas is mainly experienced in the secular relationships of the brothers.

Readers of this special book section are referred to Anthony Quinton's article on p. 43, where further books on social theory are discussed.

In Houses

Slack lower lip trembling like a bee-stung cheek
The old crone says, when she feels she stands too long
For moving people to find reasonable,
"Waiting for my daughter".
"Silly old thing" is the most the neighbours say
"She knows no one could possibly believe, after all these years
Of waiting for her daughter, that she expects her.
Why doesn't she get out a bit and see real people?
There's Mrs Porritt over the way, older than her,
No stronger, anyhow, and she gets out."

Not that she would mind missing the daughter
But how could she afford, so meagrely evented,
To miss the knowledge she'd been visited?
Of late she's found relief. The gasman called.
Sudden resource to lighten these empty days:
"Got to wait in in case the gasman calls."
Timely defence against the need for daughters.

Jenny Joseph

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

An Archaeological Reply

Fantasies at Knossos

By Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood

THE FIRST, and spontaneous, reaction of the professional archaeologist when confronted with a piece such as Gerhard Prause's "The Mystery of Knossos: An Archaeological Controversy", published in the May ENCOUNTER, is to shrug it off as not worth bothering about. However, on second thoughts, one realises that such a reaction is guilty of élitism, élitism indeed of an unacceptable type: unconcern for the misinformation of the non-specialist cannot be morally justified in the historical sciences, part of the function of which is to educate the layman in the history of past societies and civilisations. But this concern with the correct historical education of the general public should not be mistaken, as it has been by Prause, for a sign of agitation and worry among complacent and ossified professional archaeologists at the appearance of a brilliant unorthodox hypothesis upsetting the sleeping sacred cows. The book on which Prause reports eulogistically, Wunderlich's *Wohin der Stier Europa trug*, may be unorthodox, but it is far from being brilliant. For it is clear to anybody acquainted with the Minoan civilisation that, as I will try to show here, Wunderlich's whole edifice rests on ignorance: ignorance of facts, and ignorance of methods. So, contrary to Prause's beliefs, all this book has raised with the specialists is a few smiles or, alternatively, sighs of exasperation, according to temperament.

CHRISTIANE SOURVINOU-INWOOD *is Elisabeth Wordsworth Junior Research Fellow at St Hugh's College, Oxford, and has contributed several articles to learned journals on Bronze Age and Classical Archaeology, Greek Religion and Linear B. Her doctoral thesis was on "Minoan and Mycenaean afterlife beliefs."*

For a variety of reasons, the history and culture of Minoan Crete, and to a lesser extent of Mycenaean Greece, have always attracted studies by amateurs, including amateurs of the type poised on the brink of the lunatic fringe. There is nothing inherently wrong with an amateur, that is, somebody who has not been professionally trained as an archaeologist/ancient historian, attempting original research in a discipline such as Minoan archaeology and history, *as long as they are prepared to acquire and master the methods of the discipline* and a necessary minimum of factual background. The methodology of any given discipline is developed through a long process of study and experimentation, trial and error, over several generations, and it has been tested against, and improved through, new discoveries. It takes a genius to revolutionise the methods of a discipline, but it takes a presumptuous fool to ignore them.

Prause seems to believe that any academic, working in any field, can pronounce with authority on problems of any other discipline, whether related or unrelated to his own. Thus he claims that Wunderlich, a professor of geology and palaeontology, cannot be dismissed "as a half-educated phantast" when making pronouncements on Aegean Bronze Age archaeology. The fallacy of the proposition is self-evident, and needs no comment. However, it would appear that Wunderlich's unreliability extends to his approach to his own field, petrology, as we will now see.

WUNDERLICH'S CASE, which Prause adopts, is briefly as follows. The Minoan palaces of Knossos, Phaestus, Mallia, Zakro, are not palaces at all, as everybody thought up to now. They are burial buildings, graves, in which the dead were also embalmed and prepared for burial. This extraordinary idea rests almost entirely on gypsum. In fact, Wunderlich's main argument is that gypsum, a material extensively used in these palaces, is too soft, and has too low a resistance to wear, to be employed in a residential building, and especially for floors and stairs. And given that it was used in the palaces, if these palaces had indeed been palaces, the gypsum would have shown signs of wear, which (he claims) it does not. Hence, the palaces were not palaces, but graves. Apart from the fact that it is not true that there are no signs of wear in the relevant parts of the Cretan palaces, the petrological part of Wunderlich's argument has been seriously challenged, and indeed proved fallacious, by W. Noll (*Antike Welt*, 1971:3, 15–20). This came as no surprise to archaeologists, ignorant like myself of the theoretical qualities

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and behaviour pattern of gypsum under pressure, but acquainted with building materials in the ancient Aegean, where gypsum was extensively used for treading areas such as floors.

The rest of the Wunderlich-Prause case is based on the assumption that the graves-interpretation solves several problems and puzzles which remain unsolved if we consider these buildings to be palaces. And here again, they succumb to the danger to which people dabbling with a discipline without possessing the necessary factual background are exposed: they see problems where problems do not exist, and then go on and produce fantastic theories in order to solve the imaginary difficulties and puzzles. For example, there is nothing surprising in finding children's burials under the floors of houses. It is a well-attested phenomenon in various periods, and found also in Mainland Greece. The ideological/religious significance of the phenomenon may be controversial, but not its existence. Or again, the vast quantities of liquid commodities stored in the palaces were not destined to be consumed by the royal household only. And with this point we pass to a very important aspect of the Cretan palaces, and of Minoan society in general, of which neither Wunderlich nor Prause appears to be aware; ignorance of it has coloured, indeed generated, their whole approach to the problem they are discussing. *The Minoan palaces were not just residences of the royal family, they were also the economic, administrative, social and religious centres of the community.* And this picture of the palaces which has emerged, clear and uncontroversial, from the excavated remains of all the palaces (as is clear to anybody who takes the trouble to read the publications of these palaces as opposed to relying on the tourist guides) was fully corroborated by the contents of the archives of the Linear B tablets discovered at Knossos—relevant, of course, to the period of the Mycenaen domination of the island. These tablets, by the way, Wunderlich and Prause take as dealing with activities connected with the dead, their embalming and preparation for burial. This suggestion is sufficient proof that neither is acquainted with the Knossos tablets. If they ever happen to have a look at them, it would be interesting to know how they would propose to tie up with this theory the issue of war-chariots, or the registers concerning flocks of sheep all over the island.

But to return to the main flow of the argument. I am not clear whether Wunderlich and Prause are aware of the fact that many Minoan cemeteries have been excavated, including an extensive and luxurious one at Arkhanes, and that as a result we have a very clear idea of what Minoan graves and burial buildings were like, as well as a clear idea of Minoan burial customs. Neither the architectural type of these graves and burial buildings nor the distribution (and indeed in many cases the type) of finds is similar to those of the palaces. On the other hand, our knowledge of Minoan settlements is more than sufficient for us to be able to distinguish between burial buildings on the one hand, and residential buildings and palaces on the other. Similarly, our knowledge of Minoan burial customs is sufficient for us to know that embalming was not practised in Minoan Crete. It is not a matter of bad preservation of mummies and of an *argumentum ex silentio*. We can actually *prove* that embalming was not practised. We can prove this thanks to a specific aspect of Minoan burial customs—a feature which they share with Mycenaean burial customs: in Minoan Crete and Mycenaean Greece, the corpse in the grave was shown respect for as long as the flesh had not disintegrated; when it did, the inarticulate bones were treated with disrespect, their grave-offerings looted, and the bones themselves could be removed or swept away in heaps into corners to make place for fresh burials. As this happened not long after burial, if the bodies had been embalmed, the embalming, which would have preserved them for at least that long, would have prevented such behaviour.

IT IS CLEAR THEN that Wunderlich's thesis, which found an enthusiastic response in Prause, is totally untenable and based on ignorance. The number of factual mistakes and methodological fallacies that Prause has managed to pack into the five and a half pages of his "report" is surprising, but to comment on all of them would be tedious and pointless. The interested reader can find an excellent and sound account of the Minoan civilisation lucidly written by a leading authority in the field for the specialist as well as for the interested layman, in Sinclair Hood's book *The Minoans: Crete in the Bronze Age* (London, 1971). Wunderlich's and Prause's efforts are of course perfectly legitimate and not to be despised, as long as it is made clear to the reader that they are to be classified under the heading "Novels with an historical background."

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LETTERS

Mishan's Inflation

PROFESSOR E. J. MISHAN's article, "The New Inflation" [ENCOUNTER, May] smacked a bit too much of the "Merry Old England" syndrome, which I thought Kingsley Amis had demolished once and for all. Although he may mourn the death blow dealt to the old tradition by the revolution of rising expectations among the masses, I believe that, from an economic point of view (and from most others, as well), today's Western world is better than that of the past. Inflation truly is a problem with which we do not yet know how to cope; but it is preferable to the mass unemployment, widespread poverty and malnutrition, and extremist politics of the 1930s. Three decades of close to full employment and fairly rapid economic growth have filled people's stomachs (and garages), spread "high" as well as "pop" culture, and greatly widened occupational opportunities, so that more people can realise their potentials. In fact, so many of us are so well off now that we can worry about such existential problems as "the meaning of life" instead of having to struggle for the means of living.

The fact that our expectations surpass the ability of the economic cornucopia to fulfil all of them, of course, creates problems; and that workers must learn that wages cannot rise faster than the rate of *national* productivity is obvious. Indeed, all sectors of a society must become aware that the pace at which we can increase our living standards depends upon the rate of economic growth. Ecological concerns mean that we must face the reality that our living standards will increase less rapidly.

It is obvious that these lessons will not be learned easily. Various groups in a society will attempt to improve their positions *vis-à-vis* others; and this will cause inflation. As long as that inflation is within reasonable limits, say 3–5% per annum (not the current double-digit world-wide shortage of supply level), then I believe that that is far preferable to what was experienced in the pre-War era. Economic growth may not have ushered in heaven on earth; but let's not overlook its positive contributions to human welfare.

ROY B. HELFGOTT
Professor of Economics

Newark College of Engineering,
New Jersey

MY COMMENT on Professor Helfgott's letter is brief. With respect to his discovery of a "Merry Old England syndrome", I can only repeat my advice about the occasional usefulness of reading an article prior to criticising it. About inflation being "preferable to mass unemployment", he could be right in some circumstances. But then I never said that inflation was the absolute worst economic phenomenon. Finally, as should be manifest even from a superficial reading, my primary concern was the connection between economic growth and the new inflation; not that between economic growth and human welfare. For some sceptical reflections on the latter topic—including one on the view that economic growth enables people to "realise their potential" (at 3% per annum, perhaps?)—I refer him to my ENCOUNTER article of May 1973, "To Grow or Not to Grow."

E. J. MISHAN

London School of Economics

Passmore's Rubbish

PROFESSOR JOHN PASSMORE ("Removing the Rubbish," ENCOUNTER, April 1974) discredits the notion that the stewardship attitude is peculiarly Christian. He links it "rather with the idea that man forms part of a chain of improvement." But crediting the notion is Sir Mathew Hale's *Account of the Good Steward*, subsection 10 entitled "Touching thy Creatures, and the Use of them, and the Dominion over them" (*Contemplations Moral and Divine;* London, 1695; pp. 271–5). And of course, Hale was writing a century before Kant.

HAROLD PORTER

Lengfeld,
Germany

DR PORTER is, of course, right about Hale. I discuss his work in my book *Man's Responsibility for Nature* (Duckworth, 1974). But not only was Hale an exception, he could write as he did only when men began to think as Pelagians rather than as Augustinians.

JOHN PASSMORE

Australian National University,
Canberra

Zaehner's "Evil"

IT IS WITH trepidation, or at least diffidence, that I dare to differ with so great a scholar as Professor R. C. Zaehner over some points in his article on "The Wickedness of Evil" (April). But precisely because he is usually so careful a writer, I suggest that some of his statements are, at best, reckless and no way provable. I do not, in fact, agree at all with the major part of the article, which seems to me to give entirely too much credit to Charles Manson and his associates for having constructed a "mystical" form of "spiritual development"—when it is at least arguable that they were all involved in a series of mindlessly brutal acts, subsequently given a "mystical" explanation. But Dr Zaehner has obviously studied this matter much more than I have, so it is not this particular episode that bothers me.

It is, rather, a series of very sweeping assertions for which no proof is, nor can be, offered. I give only a few:

1. ". . . most of us no longer feel that we have a fixed frame of reference from which we can begin to make any sense of our lives. Traditional Christianity as taught by the churches no longer seems to make any sense."

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2. ". . . the only factor the two [Christianity and Eastern Mysticism] have in common is an equal dislike and distrust of human reason."
3. "How, then, can we call [God] good? In purely human terms we cannot. . . ."
4. "Nobody takes [the God of *Isaiah* 55] seriously any more."
5. "Many have turned for more mystical comfort to the East [and have found] that religion does not necessarily mean an unquestioning obedience to the will of Someone who, to the average man of today, must appear as an irrational and sometimes brutal tyrant."

1. How can it be proved that "most of us no longer feei etc."—is it not at least equally likely that there are millions now living, and those not the most ignorant, who do feel that they have such a "frame of reference"?

2. Did Aquinas, or does Dr Bernard Lonergan, "dislike and distrust" human reason?

3. Do not millions today, within and without Christianity, call God good?

4. *Nobody?*

5. How does Dr Zaehner know this of the *average man*?

I apologise for the great length and poor organisation of this response.

(Rev.) D. Bernard Theall, O.S.B.
The Catholic University of America,
Washington, D.C.

Whether my "statements" are reckless or not is a matter of opinion. That they are not "provable" is a truism in all matters connected with religion. That the major Christian Churches have consistently tried to rationalise the irrational in order to make what they themselves call a "mystery" acceptable to the current philosophies of their time may or may not have been wise. Muslim orthodoxy decided against this policy, which may account for the vitality of Muslim *faith* right up to the present time.

As to Dom Bernard's five points:

1. Of course you cannot "prove" what most of us "feel." But the mass defections of Roman Catholic priests particularly in the United States would seem to suggest that very many Catholics *have* lost all sense of direction. Most responsible Catholics admit this and some even welcome it.

2. A very fair point. But neither Aquinas nor Lonergan represent Christianity as a whole. Theology is *not* religion; Aristotle is not Jesus of Nazareth (as Luther pointed out long ago). That Aquinas imported Aristotelian ethics so largely into Christianity seems to me much to his credit since he thereby persuaded the average Christian that the "counsels of perfection" were an ideal normally inaccessible to wayward man.

3. No doubt millions do still *call* God good. This is, however, certainly not the impression a Buddhist would obtain on reading the Old Testament. Does a "good" God drive Saul mad for failing to commit genocide on the Amalekites? It is up to Dom Bernard to demonstrate in what sense God can be considered good.

4. I willingly detract "nobody." I should have added "except a few Christians still unaffected by the erosion of their beliefs by secular non-values."

5. Of course I *know* nothing at all about the "average man", any more than did Jung or does Dom Bernard. As ivory towers go, I suppose there is little to choose between All Souls College, Oxford, the Jung Institute in Zürich or the Catholic University of America, Washington D.C. One advantage that the first of these institutions would appear to have over the other two is that it tries to foster in its own small way a complete open-mindedness. It also contains a Sociologist of Religion whose findings do not appear to conflict with the points in my article which Dom Bernard rightly finds questionable.

May I conclude by assuring Dom Bernard that I remain a Catholic *both* because I accept Tertullian's affirmation that Christianity "must needs be believed because it is absurd" and that "it is certain because it is impossible", *and* because, as a more or less rational animal, I find that Aristotle can and does, in his own cautious way, make me understand how the "absurd" can be clothed in more or less rational garments.

R. C. Zaehner
All Souls College,
Oxford

Mysteries of Knossos?

We were appalled to read of the fanciful theories submitted by Professor Wunderlich in "The Mystery of Knossos" (May). It is strange that after all these years of truly scientific research, any room would be left, or need be felt, to develop an "original" theory. At any rate the difficulties that Professor Wunderlich raises regarding the traditional interpretations pose no substantial problems. A few examples will suffice to prove the point.

1. *The Gypsum*—Knossos was a royal palace and, as is well known, did not serve as a normal place of residence but was closely associated with the cult and its observation. As a result there was not at all "a numerous staff of servants", nor "permanent public access"; access to Knossos was highly restricted both in terms of numbers allowed and rooms open to the visitors. Therefore there is no reason to expect signs of wear.

2. *The Baths*—As Professor Wunderlich well knows, the sarcophagi discovered in burial sites elsewhere bear no resemblance to the baths of Knossos. On the other hand it is clear that these baths cannot be compared with modern hygienic devices. In actual fact they were used by the royal family—adults and children—as part of the ritual of the cult—a fact which (partly) explains the supply of oil and accounts for the absence of a water drainage system.

3. *The Statuettes*—Why necessarily figures of death? After all such statuettes were found on innumerable sites throughout the region where there is no suspicion of a connection with death.

4. *The Storage of Oil*—We know that the storage of grain was a royal prerogative and one of the sources of royal power. In the same way it is likely that oil was stored not only for the practical and ritual uses of the royal household (as hitherto alluded to) but was

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distributed from time to time among the general populace for their needs. One of the more important functions of the palace was that of a storage place, thereby explaining the odd dimensions of many of the rooms.

To the examples provided here, many more could be supplied, responding to the other points made in the article. Although entertaining as speculations, Professor Wunderlich's theories simply do not stand up to the test of fact.

MARY GOLDMAN
DONALD ISAACSON

Jerusalem

(Parentheses)

IT'S STRANGE *that Sir Hugh Cudlipp* [ENCOUNTER, August] should write about Richard Crossman's untidy prose in such appallingly untidy prose. I'm sure even a down-table sub on the *Daily Mirror* would strike his *nine* fussy parentheses.

PHILLIP HODSON

London

[*Ed. Note.*—We're sorry, but (at least) three of the parentheses were (alas) ours.]

Black Mountain

IN HIS REVIEW of Martin Duberman's *Black Mountain —An Exploration of Community* [ENCOUNTER, July], Alan Brownjohn affects to deplore the estrangement of the "English" English from the "American" English school of poetry and suggests that each camp could well learn from the other.

However, Mr Brownjohn's discussion of the "Black Mountain" poets and in particular of Charles Olson must be regarded as a partisan and ill-judged attack which can only exacerbate the hostility between orthodox groups and the experimentalists. Olson is described as "a genius of a kind," but as inferior to Pound and William Carlos Williams who are held to be "much greater, much more informed and better integrated men." "Greater" we must accept as Mr Brownjohn's subjective judgment since he offers no evidence to support it; "more informed" is questionable since one does not know what sort of information is valued—Williams, for instance, knew more about medicine than Olson, and Pound more about European Renaissance literature, but Olson probably knew more about ancient American civilisations and archaeology than either of them. "Better integrated" is an equally curious phrase. I am not sure how Mr Brownjohn has assessed the relative "integration" of Pound, Williams and Olson, or in what respect "integration" is considered a valuable quality. It is hardly a literary criterion. Perhaps he is referring to Olson's fitness for the rectorship of Black Mountain College or for teaching the young. This ambiguity is characteristic of the whole review: somehow, the failure of Black Mountain College is allowed to condemn the poetry of Olson, Duncan, Creeley and others, while at the same time the avant-garde style of writing, which Mr Brownjohn so evidently dislikes, is held responsible for the collapse of the college. It is of course possible that bad or flawed lives can lead to bad or flawed art and vice versa. But if this is what Mr Brownjohn believes, he should make himself clear, and should also, in fairness to Olson, and his fellow teachers in the final period of Black Mountain, point out the difficulties the college was in even before their arrival.

Certainly English writers can enjoy and learn from these American poets; this does not necessitate a slavish mimicry of any of them. Poetasters are no new phenomenon, and Olson always repudiated attempts by other poets to copy his style. In fact, his theory of poetry and conception of the impersonal or objective use of the poet's "self" is totally opposed to all such imitation.

There is room for a considered criticism of the merits of Olson's teaching and for an evaluation of his poetry. But his own success as a poet is not to be judged by the efforts of those who have been influenced either by his precepts or his example. It is unfortunate that Mr Brownjohn should have marred his important and probably influential review with these confusing and unsubstantiated criticisms of the "Black Mountain" poets. Alan Brownjohn has made the effort to come to terms with their poetry. Regrettably, the bulk of the English orthodoxy has not made, and is unwilling to make this effort. Mr Brownjohn might have realised that his review will tend to confirm existing prejudices and increase rather than reduce the misunderstanding and distrust which exists between the two camps and which is impoverishing contemporary English poetry.

KATHLEEN GILBERT

Edinburgh 10

IT MIGHT HELP to attempt to separate the value and influence of the poetry which came out of Black Mountain from the personalities and the place; though in this particular instance the interconnections were so thorough and pervading that it is a difficult thing to do, and we may still be too close to it all to make the distinctions which posterity may be able to manage. To run these two together into one, invidiously, as Miss Gilbert feels I did, was no part of my intention; though I suppose it was one of the risks of prefacing a review of an illuminating account of the Black Mountain venture with a preamble and digressions about the poetry that my remarks could have been taken that way.

Olson's importance as a poet I take to be unquestionable. But in the phrase to which Miss Gilbert objects I was endeavouring to convey an opinion that even many ardent admirers of Olson would concede: that Williams and Pound were not only finer poets and better-equipped intellectually for what they were attempting to do, but had also an altogether more coherent—"integrated", if you like—sense of what they were really about. Like all points of view this is contestable. But a full comparison of the three poets lay outside the scope of a review, where, surely, a personal judgment is permissible without writing a very long article indeed to support it?

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I find it impossible—leaving aside the poetry now—not to see, from a reading of Mr Duberman's immensely detailed history, the last years of Black Mountain as a sorry tale of the waste and decline of an *institution* as a result of sheer mismanagement by those entrusted with it. Whatever the value of the work produced by the ever-narrowing circle around Charles Olson in those last days, people did not behave responsibly enough to keep Black Mountain in business. "Bad or flawed lives" is melodramatic; there was just no one who cared sufficiently to stop the downward slide to dereliction and closure—an old story, alas.

ALAN BROWNJOHN

London

Watson's "Duped Intellectuals"

GEORGE WATSON'S "Were the Intellectuals Duped?" (December, 1973) was a timely article, particularly when shortly after I read it some Canadian intellectuals were asserting foolishly (or innocently?) that Solzhenitsyn could only expect the treatment he got because no government can allow its citizens to refuse a summons with impunity. . . . Intellectual treason will always repeat itself, it seems. However, I think Mr Watson clouds his argument somewhat in the section headed "The Reverence of [for?] Violence."

His suggestion that Orwell's claim that the 1930s intellectuals advocated violence without knowing what it meant was an "easy view" stemming from his "Etonian" background—while our more experienced generation knows better—sits oddly with Orwell's jibes at the public-school-Newboltian-scoutmaster tradition. It was the public school's "five years in a lukewarm bath of snobbery" that did much to nurture violence in the head; the connection there between "team spirit" and socialism is as much Orwell's as Bertrand Russell's. Orwell's most convincing view is to argue, not so much that they didn't know what they were saying, but that no deeper understanding had been awakened in them—such as he had found emerged from his own Spanish experience. It concentrates the sympathies wonderfully, as some (not all) of the Great War poets attested, to kill a man in the flesh (see Orwell's description of the night attack in *Homage to Catalonia,* Chapter 7). Orwell's earlier allusion in "Inside the Whale" to the 1920s appeal of A. E. Housman's "adolescent" themes—"murder, suicide, unhappy love, early death"—is central to Orwell's diagnosis. Auden, Spender, Day Lewis, Cornford, etc. were romantically in love with violence, as was Yeats till the Civil War moved him to his great "Meditations": *'We had fed the heart on fantasies, / The heart's grown brutal from the fare. . . .*" Auden and Day Lewis later revised or suppressed their ignorant-hearted poems. Auden's unhappy wrestling with "Spain" till he finally disowned it altogether deserved Mr Watson's acknowledgement.

His confession, in the Foreword to *Collected Shorter Poems* (1966), that he had concluded "Spain" with the lines,

> *History to the defeated*
> *May say alas but cannot help or pardon*

"simply because it sounded to me rhetorically effective", acutely illustrates *R*'s shrewd reminder (January 1974) of the "higher frivolity" that academic critics ploddingly miss.

My second point concerns C. Day Lewis's quoted stanza beginning "It is the logic of our times." Mr Watson's comments do not bring out its full significance. It was, certainly, written in 1940, as Day Lewis tells us in *The Buried Day,* where he also gives some licence for Mr Watson's reading—"the temper of those lines existed years before 1940, when they were written." However, they were published in 1943 in *Word Over All,* as the second and final stanza of a poem entitled "Where Are the War Poets?", whose first stanza runs:

> *They who in folly or mere greed*
> *Enslaved religion, markets, laws,*
> *Borrow our language now and bid*
> *Us to speak up in freedom's cause.*

If one also corrects Mr. Watson's misquotation of the third line of his stanza to read "That we who *lived* [not "live"] by honest dreams," it becomes clear that the whole poem is Day Lewis's rueful acknowledgment that the poets surviving into the Second World War, their '30s dream besmirched, can only fall back on defending an unjust society against a vicious one.

MICHAEL THORPE

University of Calgary

Divine Mystery

I HAVE NOT RECEIVED the August edition of ENCOUNTER although I am a subscriber. Instead, I was somewhat bewildered to receive a copy of *Ensign,* a magazine published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This magazine arrived in the ENCOUNTER wrapper.

I have considered the possibility that this may be a sign from God, and that a miraculous transmutation of ENCOUNTER occurred en route. However, while it may well be true that the Lord works in mysterious ways, past experience indicates that the British postal service also works in highly mysterious ways, and I suspect, therefore, that there is a more prosaic explanation of this disturbing phenomenon.

I would be grateful if you would send me a copy of the August edition of ENCOUNTER. I shall look forward (apprehensively) to receiving it.

yours faithfully,
ALASDAIR MUNRO

Bridge of Allan,
Stirlingshire,
Scotland

Jews in the Middle East

GENERAL BAR LEV, about whom Peter Schmid wrote in "Letter from Cairo" [ENCOUNTER, May] comes not from Kiev but from Yugoslavia—South Slavia, a country nearer to the Orient with its "thousand-year-old civilisation." (To be precise, Haim Bar Lev was born in Vienna and apparently spent his early childhood in Yugoslavia.)

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Be that as it may, the majority of Israel's Jewish inhabitants are natives of the Orient, of "Arab" lands where in many instances Jews were settled long, long before the present Arab masters; lands—it should be added—from which these same Jews, a million and more, stripped of their possessions, beaten and humiliated, were expelled by Arabs. Was it perchance by officers like Adli Sherif who asked "extremely politely what [these Jews] wished"?

WILLIAM G. BRAUDE

Providence,
Rhode Island

R's Vidal

YOUR COLUMNIST *R* in your May issue describes Gore Vidal's *Burr* as being "marvellously vivid, amusing and fascinating", and this estimate, he says, "cannot be denied."

There are very few statements that cannot be denied and *R* does not have to look very far to find this one resoundingly disputed. The reviewer in *The Times Literary Supplement* (3/22/74) called the same book "unspeakably heavy and congested" and, for good measure, "achingly dull." Others have found it blatantly tendentious, full of distortions, and hardly more than a sweaty jape that does not come off.

R is entitled, one supposes, to his ecstatic gurgles over *Burr*, or anything else, but he should refrain from offering them as ultimate and unassailable truths which "cannot be denied."

RICHARD HANSER

Mamaroneck
New York

Harry Dexter White & Alger Hiss

R [ENCOUNTER, April] writes: "We must also remember that, unlike Alger Hiss, White never had the opportunity of defending himself, or of challenging his accusers, in a court of law"—with the implication that he might have profited if he had had it. Perhaps so, but Hiss didn't exactly improve his credibility by having that opportunity, did he?

J. C. MAXWELL

Balliol College,
Oxford

INDEX TO VOLUME XLII

THE INDEX to Volume XLII (January-June 1974) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on the standing orders list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically.

AUTHORS

Isaac Bashevis Singer's latest book of stories, *A Crown of Feathers*, is published by Jonathan Cape. . . .

Henry Fairlie, who now lives in the United States, is the author of *The Kennedy Promise* (Eyre Methuen and Doubleday, 1973), which will be reissued by Dell in paperback this autumn. His previous articles in ENCOUNTER include "Letter from Washington" (January 1973), "Years of Intellectual Havoc" (September 1972), and "The Practice of Puffers" (August 1971). . . .

Anthony Quinton is a Fellow of New College, Oxford, and a University Lecturer in Philosophy. His latest book is *The Nature of Things* (Routledge, 1971). . . .

Alan Ryan teaches politics at New College, Oxford. He is the author of *The Philosophy of John Stuart Mill* (Macmillan, 1970) and a number of articles on social and political theory. . . .

Lucy Mair was Professor of Applied Anthropology at the London School of Economics from 1963–1968. Among her books are *Marriage* (Penguin, 1971), *Witchcraft* (Weidenfeld, 1969), and *An Introduction to Social Anthropology* (Oxford University Press, 1966); Cambridge University Press will publish her *African Societies* in the near future. . . .

T. R. Fyvel, journalist and broadcaster, is the author of *The Insecure Offenders* (1961) and *Intellectuals Today* (1968). He also edited *Frontiers of Sociology* (Routledge, 1969). . . .

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Yale University

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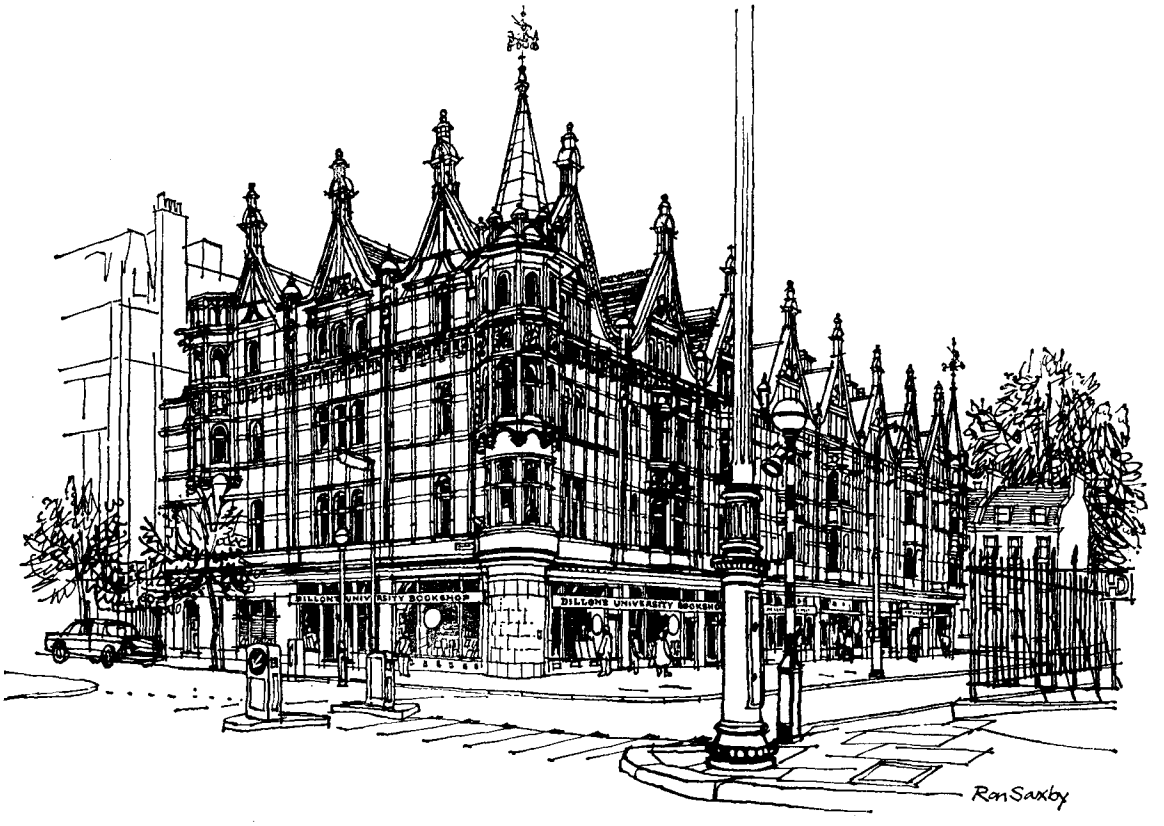

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